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New York
New York

A study of the quality, character, and meaning
of open space in urban design.

Prepared for

The City of New York
John V. Lindsay, Mayor

Housing and Development Administration
Jason R. Nathan, Administrator

by
Lawrence Halprin & Associates

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Department of Housing and Urban Development
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March 1968

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Introduction

When we started to work on this report both the subject matter and our purposes seemed quite simple and obvious. We had been asked to investigate the open spaces in New York housing and urban renewal areas and to make recommendations as to how these might be improved.

I am quite sure that our recommendations had been subconsciously predetermined. We all know that a considerable determinant of environmental amenity depends on open space and it has been widely understood for some time that open space by itself is only a beginning—that its design and how it is detailed is at least as important as the mere fact of its existence. We have had before us the images of European streets, plazas, and squares whose qualities far outshine our own, whose characteristics, more than the forms of their architecture, have created the ambience of European cities.

We had thought that we were embarked on a study of the New York townscape—on its street scene, its parks and plazas, and the components which make it up. We would, we thought, focus on the enriched potential inherent in beautiful pavings, on handsome street furniture, on benches, on lighting fixtures, trash containers, playground equipment, graphics and fountains. We had presumed a study on urban open space aesthetics—a manual of design. We wished to make New York City beautiful. I had written such a book on cities some years ago and intended to apply its lessons to New York City in a particular way.

However, as we embarked on our investigations we became increasingly aware that open space does not exist in a vacuum—that it could not be treated by and of itself as an isolated phenomenon. The more we thought, the more we probed, the more we realized that open space in New York City was, in fact, the resultant of many influences, that it arose as the end product of innumerable forces. We decided then that we must discover the nature and character of these determinants. And so we began.

As we probed, we found more. We started with zoning, for we realized how much influence it had, not only on the shape and form of buildings, but on the configurations of the open spaces around them. It became clear that zoning and other restrictive ordinances established densities and land coverage and, thus had a profound influence on the open spaces in the city. This led us into problems of administration and the influences of administrative procedures, decisions and management, legal decisions and statutes, laws and legislation. It became clearer and clearer that these had an enormous impact on results, and so we found we had to look into many of the implications of enabling legislation at the federal, state and local level.

Having arrived thus far we became increasingly interested in the ecological interrelations of the urban dweller and his environment. We realized the significance of open space as a biological necessity as well as a visual or functional one. Thus our investigations led us into a study of environmental factors such as sun, light, climatology, air and wind movements, radiation impact, and the optimum condition for these in relation to building locations and the intricate interrelation between building masses and open spaces and their effects on microclimate. We feel that these ecological factors should become increasingly important as basic principles underlying the design of the urban environment.

Overriding all of these is the effect of open space on the people who will use it. Where many of the previous factors have been studied at length and our task seemed largely a matter of digging out the data and collating it, it was in the area of human and psychological interaction with the environment that we discovered a vast vacuum.

We discovered designers have always operated on a series of assumptions—mostly untested. We have very little "hard" information on how people **really** react to their environment. What we have had is novelistic—romantic or poetic, inferred rather than studied, hoped for rather than assured. Open space in cities has always been projected as a moral imperative like God and mother. But is it? And what kind and where and how? Over the years design attitudes have changed. First came Ebenezer Howard who said "the country must invade the town." Thirty years ago axial relationships between buildings and monumental open spaces derived from the Renaissance tradition were the vogue. Then came Le Corbusier's vision of the new shining city, prototype for so much of the planning of the 40's and 50's. More recently we have begun to hark back to medieval traditions; a more intricate quality of open spaces is beginning to emerge. But which is right? Changing vogues and experimentation in painting and sculpture seem acceptable and exciting, but we have felt that the parameters for decisions on environmental design and human habitations ought somehow to be more firmly based. Though purely personal and intuitive aesthetic attitudes have their validity, we felt the need to search for firmer foundations.

As a foundation for design we suspected that both the real and the unexpressed, the obvious and the hidden responses of the urban dweller to his environment might give us clues. It was a matter of some urgency to find out, however, what these were. Thus we began a search into the relationships of cultural and ethnic systems to environment and the impact of background on attitudes; then we began to probe into the psychological impact of open spaces on individual human behavior. Realizing that cities are composed not only of individuals but individuals coming together to form groups, we began discussions and studies on group dynamics and needs and how these were affected by design. From these studies we hoped to discover what design should in fact try to be.

Next we went out into the field to look at the city with a designer's eye. We tried, wherever we could, the impossible. Which is to say we tried to look as if we had never seen before—as if for the first time we walked down a city street; as if for the first time our feet reacted to the pavement underfoot; as if for the first time we looked into a candy store or a drug store along the way; as if for the first time we played in the neighborhood playground. Out of these reactions we tabulated what seemed aesthetically sound or not, what was exciting, what was dull, what was innovative, and what was banal.

Finally we have attempted to **apply** our findings. We selected (with the Housing and Development Administration) six projects which vary greatly in location, size, type, age and approach, in various parts of the city. Some are completed and occupied, some under construction, some are in the process of design. Using many of the principles we have evolved in our studies we have analyzed these projects—visually, ecologically, administratively, psychologically, etc. Our suggestions are made freely, without reference to the time or other constraints involved. Wherever a proposed modification involves a violation of existing zoning requirements, or intensification of density beyond present mapping, we have noted these facts and weighed their desirability. It was decided at the inception of this study that the projects we were to review should be "real" ones, and this meant that they either had to exist or be in actual, not conceptual, design. This, we hoped, would keep our report from being too idealized.

As a result of this decision, however, many of our recommendations inevitably come "after the fact," i.e., projects **are** built or now **are** under construction. To effect changes in these would require changes in zoning after public hearings and evaluation of such change in the city as a whole. We hope that some of these, at least, are for the sake of future design potentials if not for projects now well into the production pipeline. In the main, our recommendations draw on the lessons of the past and present and are meant to be guides for future planning.

One of the most searing problems facing New York renewal is one we have not tried to analyze in this report. This is the issue of human renewal on an economic and integrative level. We have not tried to deal with the problems of disenfranchised Negroes in Harlem, in Bedford Stuyvesant and other parts of the city. For this we must turn to the Logue and other reports and their implementation, now in their formative and creative stages in Model Cities, scatter sites and urban renewal areas in New York City.

But no report of renewal in New York can elide this problem. It is the hair shirt of all our cities, all of our country. We are paying for past mistakes.

We sense that Negroes like any other group have come to the conclusion that their salvation lies within their own hands. Black power is, we suspect, a response (as Martin Luther King has said) to the failure of white power. We gather that the black community does not want the white community to impose its own middle class standards. That seems consonant with what we have recommended. What is needed here, as it is elsewhere, is self-determination and complete participation in all phases of planning and programming. The black community must, we believe, structure its own renewal. But open occupancy, opportunities for economic advancement, job opportunities, and increased ability for property ownership must underlie the whole forward thrust.

A word should be noted about our procedures. Though we have, through the facilities and personnel of our own office, brought to bear the professions of landscape architecture, planning, architecture, urban design, cultural geography, and ecology, the magnitude of the task demanded much more than these. In addition, I strongly felt that we should not get hung up on our own biases as well as our own limitations. For these reasons we have enlisted the assistance of a series of distinguished colleagues and consultants from allied fields (see Consultants). We have had conversations and dialogues and each has contributed ideas, attitudes, comments, and has brought his own wealth of background to our report. We have had many opportunities for interaction and creative interrelationships. For all of us these discussions have been a fascinating process.

I must point out that in the end, responsibility for conclusions and the writing of the report rests on my shoulders. In such a complex subject there cannot and probably should not be complete agreement. I think we agree on purpose—which is to evolve a rich and diverse environment which will open up the greatest potential for the New York urban dweller. Where we have disagreed I have tried to indicate the area and reasons for disagreement. Most of all I wish to thank our consultants for their generosity and their energy and enthusiasm for this project.

Finally, I wish to thank my staff. It is not a euphuism to point out how much has rested on *their* shoulders. They have all become so involved in the process of discovery that we all regret its ending. James Coleman, my Associate, has been project director, I want to thank him for his dedication and deep involvement. A special debt of gratitude goes to Jerry Jonas who lived this investigation intensely — thinking, designing, and planning, also developing many of the sketches; Walther Grunwald has been responsible for interviewing, photographing, and planning. Other staff members who have contributed greatly are Sue Yung Li Ikeda, editorial assistant, Felix Warburg, Don Dommer, Curtis Schreier, John Chitty, Billie Vrtiak, Marvin Mayeux, and Tom Thorpe (geographer). A special note of thanks is due Dr. Paul Baum, gestalt psychologist, who has brought the wholistic view of life and its processes into this report.

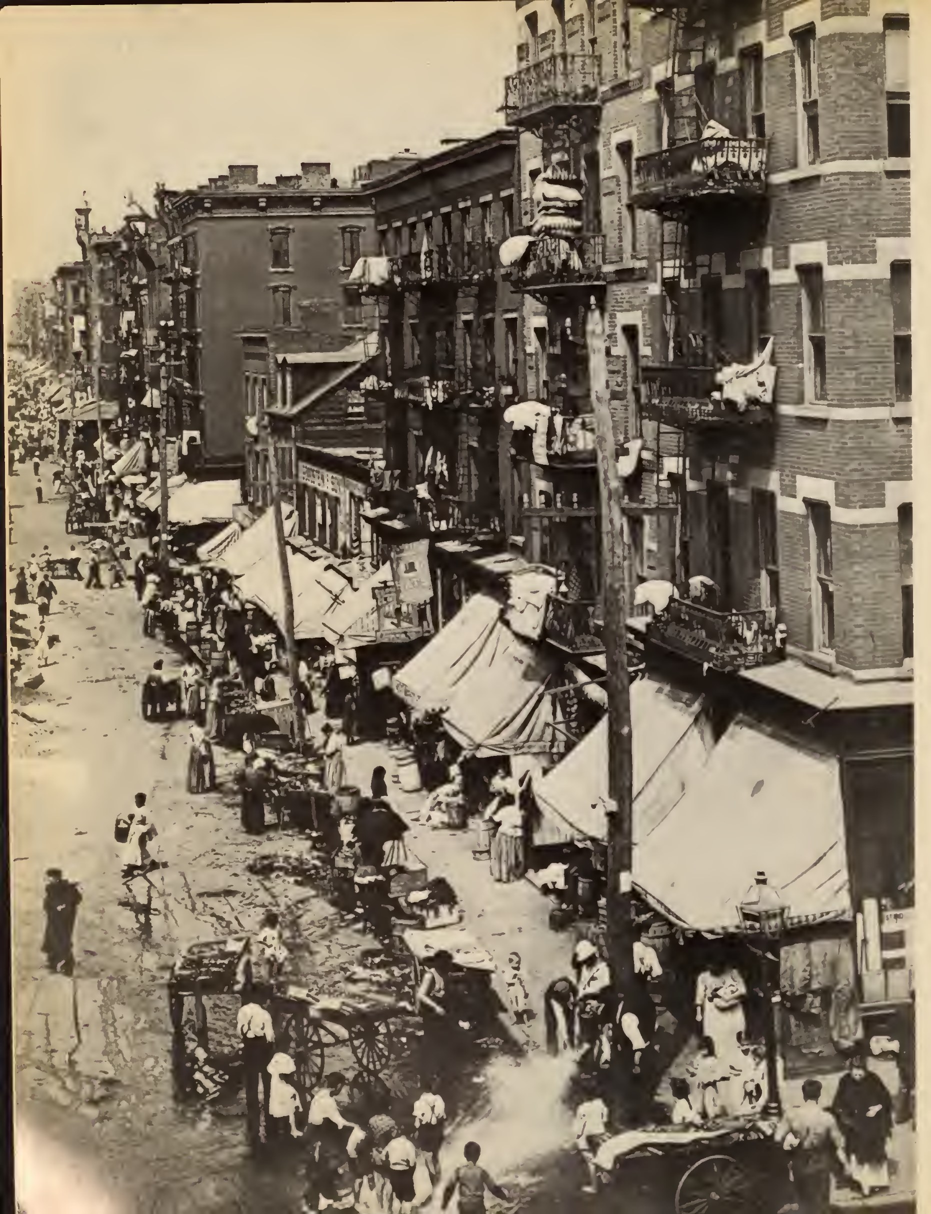
A final word of thanks is extended to Bessie Economou and Commissioner Samuel Ratensky who were instrumental in initiating this report. Mr. Ratensky has acted also as a creative client; he has aided by much factual information and by his encouragement of our procedures throughout. We also wish to thank Mr. Jay Nathan, Administrator of Housing and Development for his support and confidence.

A word about my own qualifications for this investigation. Both my grandfathers, as very young men, had the good sense as well as the imperative to leave Russia in the 1880's and come to New York. Like so many of the Jewish immigrants of their day they settled on the Lower East Side, where my parents were born. I myself was born in the Bronx and then we moved to Flatbush. I went to school in Brooklyn. I have, therefore, considerable firsthand knowledge from memories, of three of the boroughs. Staten Island I do not know, though I used to go there on the ferry, and Queens only because I had some girl friends there. My parents now live on East 74th Street.

I am, of course, a renegade New Yorker. During the war I boarded my destroyer in San Francisco and never came home. There is much to learn in that most beautiful of American cities, San Francisco, which I believe is applicable to New York, our most exciting city. I am, I must confess, grateful for the five hour transcontinental jet—it makes it joyfully possible to live with a foot on the edge of both oceans.

All of us who have worked on this report regret the necessity to bring our studies to such an early conclusion. We feel strongly that this is only a beginning. Much still remains to be done. We would like to go on. The time has been far too short to cover the allotted ground. But we also feel that it is important to get our investigations out in the field where they can be tested and used, hoping that we will be able to continue them further in the years ahead.

Lawrence Halprin



Hester Street, New York, 1888. Popularly known as the Pig Market, this stretch of the street was the principal shopping center of the most crowded slum district in the city: the Tenth Ward, also known as the "suicide ward."

Part I
Six Projects

Six Projects

Housing in New York has had a long and difficult history. Each wave of immigrants, starting with the Dutch, brought to New York a new group of disenfranchised poor, full of hope, full of problems, but fired with energy and determination to improve their lot. The village at the lower tip of Manhattan moved northward along the spine of the island in a series of waves. As the rich went north to the edges of the city the poor moved into their abandoned buildings—whole families occupying rooms which previously had been assigned to single servant girls. Crowding generated disease; rats and vermin filled the streets; light and air were blocked out. As densities rose neighborhoods became glutted with people, the immigrants had insufficient sanitary facilities, health suffered, derelicts slept in the doorways of tenements, New York became a rat infested, garbage filled slum.

During the 20th century the history of New York housing has been a search for ways to clear the slums, bring back light and air and healthful conditions to the areas which had so badly deteriorated.

We are in the midst of a new accelerated wave of building which is partly in response to new waves of immigration (primarily from Puerto Rico) and the new internal demands of the negro population. They wish those qualities in the environment from which they have sadly been excluded and which they have every right to expect. In addition, the city has become again a place to live rather than to get away from at the earliest moment.

This report is an attempt to pinpoint these needs and describe how they can be achieved.

New York City has a long and pioneering history of efforts to clear and regulate the slums, and to control the density and character of land uses, starting with the Tenement House Law of 1901 which was in its day hailed as a piece of forward-looking legislation. Later, in 1916, New York City adopted the first zoning ordinance in the country which, before its replacement in 1961 by the current ordinance, had undergone over a thousand amendments in an attempt to improve it.

Together, with myriad subsequent laws and amendments, including the Multiple Dwelling Law of 1929, these ordinances were designed to prevent overcrowding, provide adequate open space, sufficient light and air, and acceptable policies of land coverage. In addition, they have been aimed at the sweatshop, the incompatible mixture of uses which put factories next to living quarters, and surrounded dwellings with foul air and miserable conditions.

In the early 30's, a new concept of public housing brought with it a wholly new physical image of city development. Buildings were designed as thin towers or slabs in order to provide maximum light and air, ventilation, and sunlight, and placed in great superblocks. It seemed reasonable to alter the form of the city; a form which it was thought had been so responsible for unpleasant and unhealthy conditions. The free standing buildings, it was hoped, would allow the city to open up and light to penetrate all rooms. The ground would then become free for grass and playgrounds and other desirable facilities. Of necessity, the buildings would have to grow higher in order to provide the necessary densities to house the people.

As a result, in the last three decades New York City has been significantly changed. A new physical pattern has emerged. This new pattern, with elements both of the "Garden City" and of Le Corbusier's vision of a new Paris, has been superposed on the grid.

Voisin Plan for rebuilding Paris, 1925. Visualization of the city as isolated buildings in a park developed in the 20's and 30's by Le Corbusier.

The street has been altered.

The dense linear pattern of New York has been opened up. Light and air and open space have been brought into the city.

But the change has been a very mixed blessing!

Though the slums are in process of disappearing, the quality of life in the new projects seems to have become unsatisfactory for their residents.

Though overcrowding has been reduced, the quality of neighborhood is disappearing.

Though sweatshops are illegal, the close interaction of work place to living place is lost.

Though mixed incompatible uses have been stopped, a new uniformity has replaced the old variety.

Though open space surrounds the buildings, the open space is sterile, uninviting, windy and lacking in interest.

Though children do not have to play in the streets, their playgrounds are made of asphalt and surrounded by cyclone fences.

Though light and air penetrate to all rooms, mother can no longer throw an apple out of the window to a hungry child.

Though green lawns surround the houses, the streets are uninteresting, if not unsafe, to walk upon.

Though projects are more widely available to different income groups, these groups tend to remain alienated from each other.

Though buildings are new and more spacious, the small Mamma-Papa store run by the new immigrant (at low rentals) on his way up has been lost.

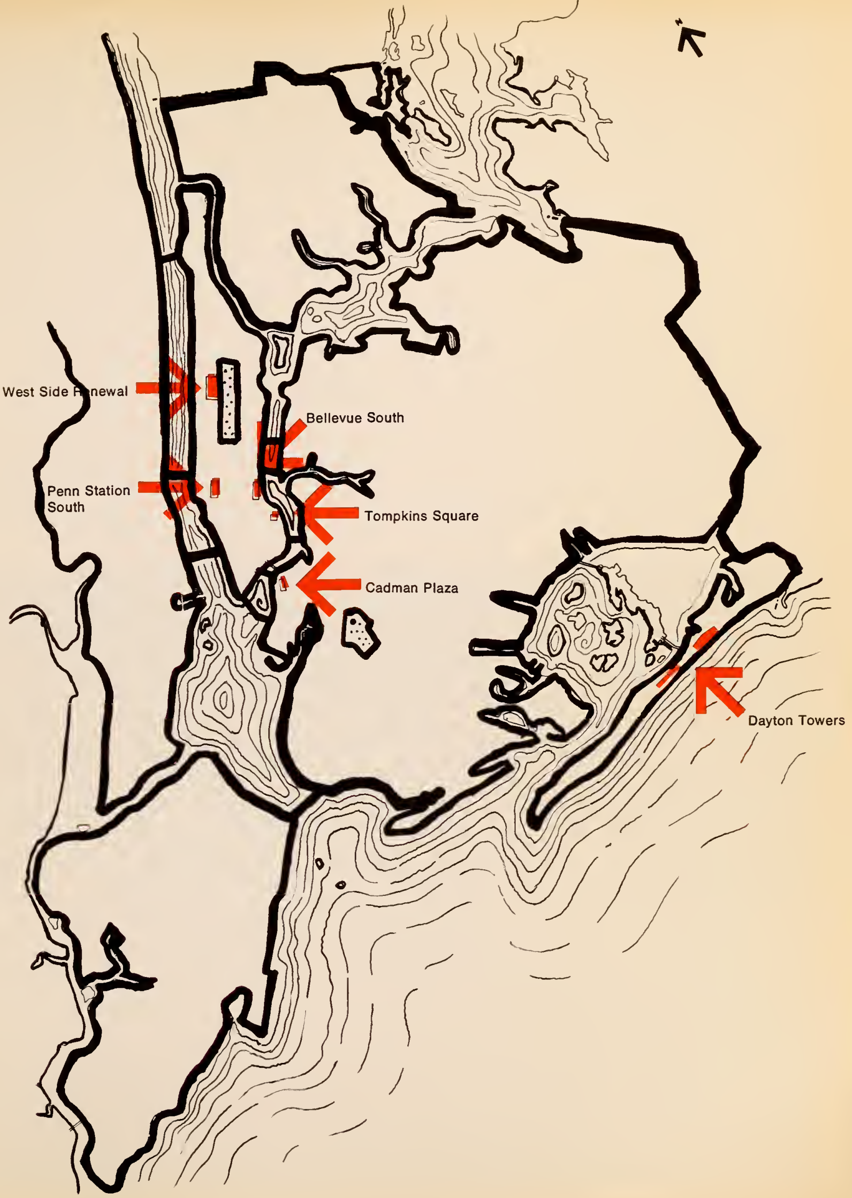
Though the pushcarts with their attendant confusion and filth on the streets have been removed, their color and vitality and the face to face interaction they made possible is now sadly lacking. (Ratensky points out correctly that the disappearance of pushcarts has to do with many factors beyond the design of environment, e.g., the trend in retail merchandising toward supermarkets and larger and fewer enterprises. I agree, but the point is to achieve the quality.)

The city which is emerging is semi-suburbanized, having neither the good qualities of the suburbs nor the excitement, the color, the variety, and the intense interaction of the former city.

We have been asked to review six major new projects which exemplify these changes in various parts of the city. They are in various stages—some are recently completed, some under construction, some are now on the drawing boards.

All are changing the face of the city and will make major contributions to living patterns. Each, however, raises serious questions as to whether we are proceeding along the right lines!

Our analyses of and proposals for these six projects follow.


West Side Renewal
Bellevue South
Penn Station South
Tompkins Square
Cadman Plaza
Dayton Towers

Westside

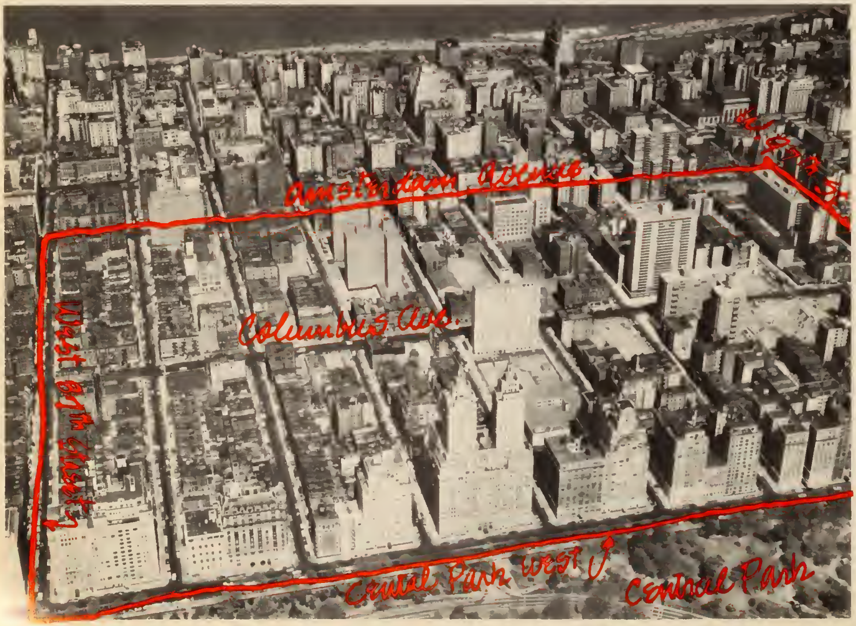
West Side Renewal Area

Existing

The West Side Renewal Area has many good things going for it. Some of the streets between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue are as full of character as any to be found in New York. Bordered by Central Park on the east and only three blocks from Riverside Drive and the Hudson River on the west, it has an abundance of existing public open space close at hand. The project comprises an area of 20 blocks with a population of approximately 40,000. With occasional exceptions, the streets are lined with 3 and 4 story brownstones and are almost exclusively residential. This was the case before renewal, and is essentially so today, except that before renewal a large number of the brownstones had been converted to rooming houses containing some of the worst and most exploitive housing in the city. The Avenues support larger apartment buildings and, with the exception of Central Park West, formerly had shops on the ground floors.

The major visual change produced by the renewal plan is the replacement of the 5 and 6 story tenements along Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues with tall tower apartment buildings and the resultant effect on the streetscape. It should be pointed out with pleasure how much more distinguished the new buildings at the northern end of this project are than the strange agglomeration of slabs in the Park West Village project one block beyond. In general the level of new construction here is quite admirable, including the new apartments with its refined arcade on 96th. Most of the brownstones on the streets and the post 1929 apartment houses on Central Park West and scattered through the area remain and are designated for rehabilitation or conservation. This is a major attempt to integrate new construction with rehabilitation and preservation of a neighborhood.

Transportation both uptown and downtown and crosstown is excellent. Two subways and at least five bus lines serve the area. Times Square and Macy's are less than 10 minutes away by subway.



Aerial

Lincoln Center is half that. Broadway, a short block away from the west edge of the project, is the local shopping and entertainment street, Columbia University is less than a mile to the north.

Lincoln Center, Central Park, the Hudson River, Broadway and Columbia University all help to give the area a sense of its location in the city fabric.

In terms of race, ethnic background, national origin and income, the area is as varied as one could find in New York, and these people are organized and vocal on behalf of their own community.

Analysis

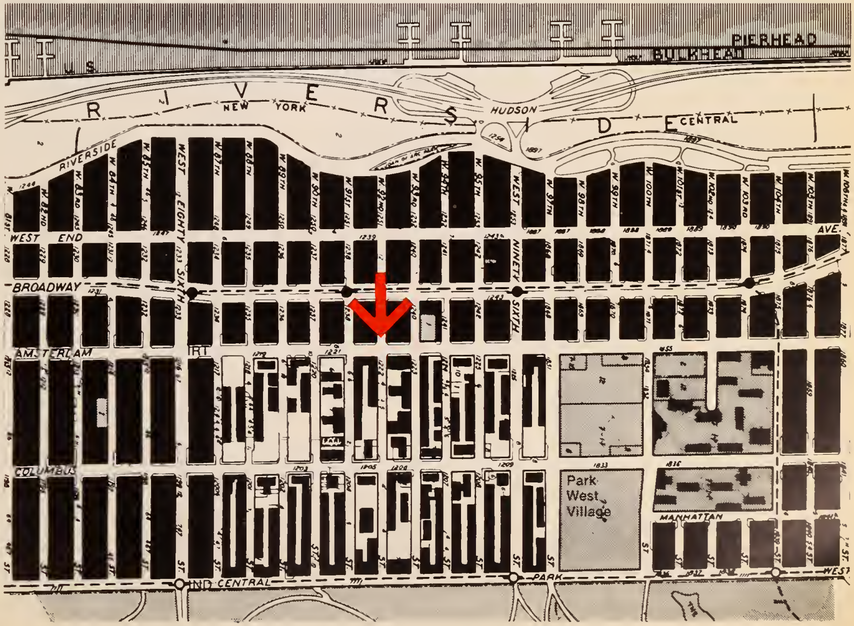
1. Visual

The visual structure of the streets between the avenues has not changed greatly with renewal. The houses remain and are being rehabilitated, street trees are being planted and the appearance by and large is one of improvement. It is quite possible, too (and ardently hoped for), that the introduction of high buildings along the avenues will reinforce the enclosure of the streets which was so well begun nearly half a century ago by the large apartment blocks on Central Park West.

The avenues by contrast to the streets are visibly changed. The sidewalks have been widened from 15 to 30 feet and the continuous facade of shops with tenements above has vanished. In their place are more or less one-story elements along the sidewalk—either shops or community rooms—with set back towers rising out of them. This is a resultant of the zoning ordinance which characterizes the roof areas of elements under a 23′ height as open space. While the height of the towers gives a significance to the avenue, the single story elements are too low and the spacing of the towers too erratic to give the avenue an urban facade.

2. Recreation and Cultural Facilities

These occur in reasonable quantity with the exception of swimming pools and facilities for teenagers. Broadway provides movie theaters and



Area Map

nearby, if not in the area itself, are restaurants and bars catering to most of the ethnic and national tastes of the community. Lincoln Center, The American Museum of Natural History, the Hayden Planetarium, the New York Historical Society, are all close by, while Central Park and Riverside Park provide opportunity for sports-oriented activities. There could be additional playgrounds and tot lots, but more important in the minds of local people is that the playgrounds and tot lots be located with shops adjacent to them so that continual surveillance by people coming and going would make them safer places to use.

3. Relationship to the Surrounding Neighborhood

Relationship to the surrounding neighborhood is successful socially, and while the visual relation of the new structures to existing ones could be better, it is an enormous improvement over many earlier attempts. Several structures nearby, notably the Louis Brandeis School, however, are fine examples of new institutional use maintaining the scale and character of existing structures; other new buildings are less successful. This area is a mixed architectural bag and repays careful attention to lessons learned. The major criticism by residents of the areas is the lack of close at hand shopping and lack in the variety of shops. There has even been concern voiced that the project lacks opportunities for marginal income shops to occur. They also decry the "meaningless plazas containing a handful of benches and some trees." Instead they want "plazas that contain a restaurant or shops that can be utilized by the neighborhood and which by attracting large numbers of people are thereby self-policing."

4. Community Spirit and Involvement

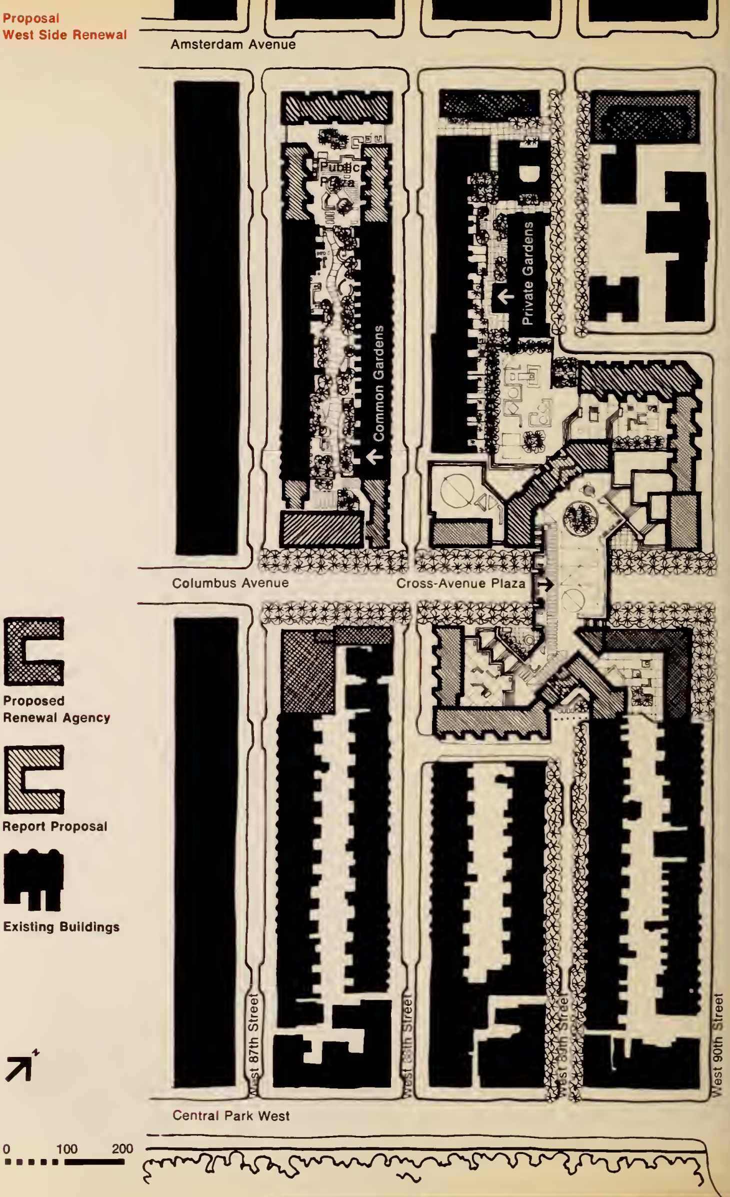
These are epitomized in the West Side Renewal Area. Although differing equities have emerged, generally all display a continuing willingness and ability to engage themselves in the process of reshaping their neighborhood on both a physical and a social level. Commitment to the neighborhood is strong.

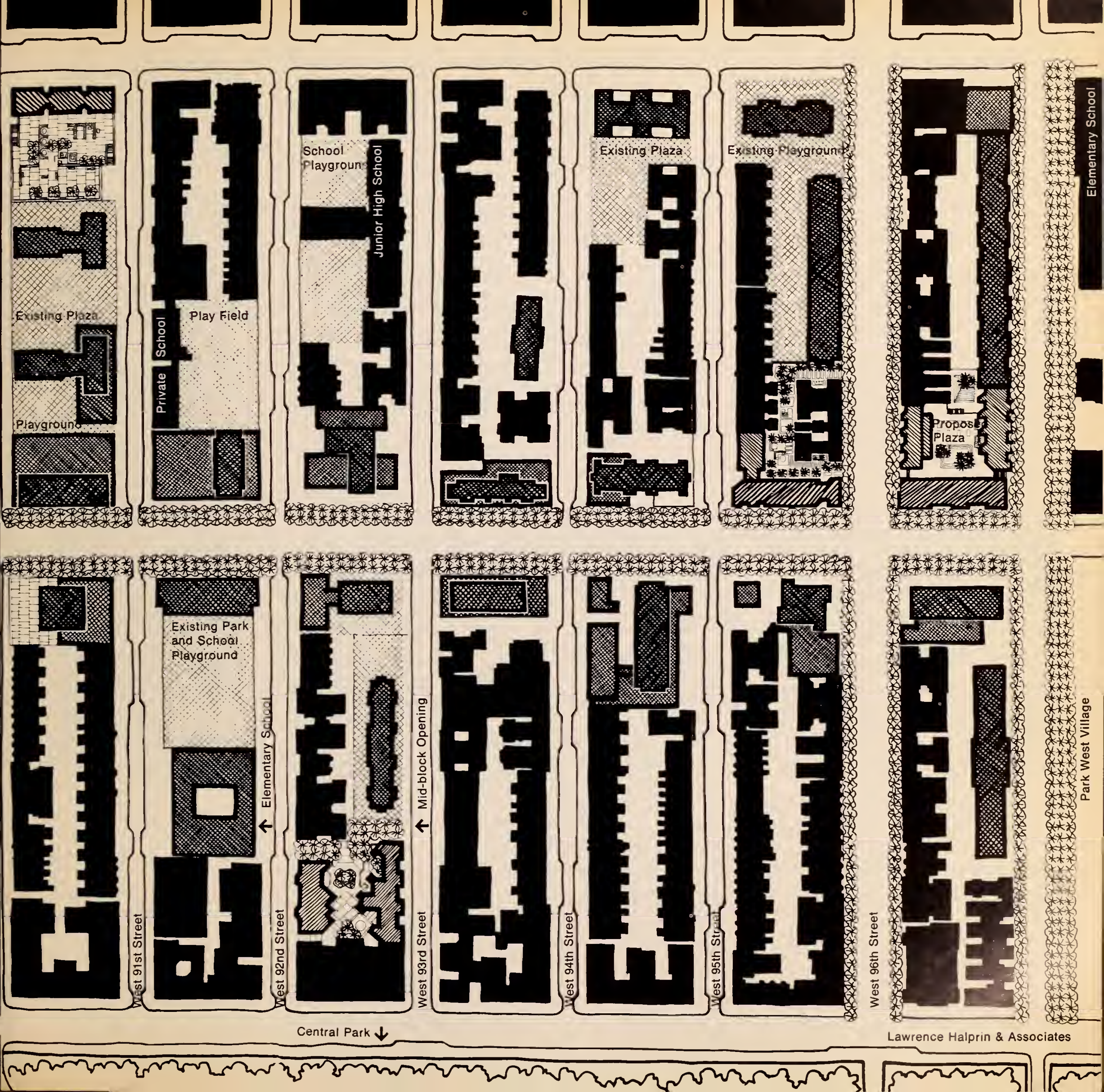
Proposals

Plantings

Our proposals agree with the original plan to establish a strong edge to Columbus Avenue by planting double rows of street trees along both sides of the street. The new sidewalks are nearly

Proposal
West Side Renewal





Lawrence Halprin & Associates

thirty feet wide and the allees thus created would not only provide the continuity of a facade but would encourage the sidewalk to be used as a plaza. Eating places could move outdoors in good weather and there could be benches, drinking fountains for people and dogs, poster kiosks, and all kinds of sidewalk markets.

Similar planting is suggested for 96th and 97th Streets—single rows on 96th and on the south side of 97th, and triple rows on the north side of 97th to create an edge.

We recommend that the center island which had been proposed for 96th Street be eliminated and the extra width be used to widen the existing sidewalks. On 97th Street we propose that the roadway **not** be curved, but continue straight with the extra width of right of way located on the north side of the street. This would make room for the triple rows of trees and in addition would provide an outdoor assembly area in front of the school. The curving of the roadway would not accomplish anything traffic-wise and would look suburban at ground level.

Aside from planting the streets and avenues our basic recommendation is to develop the ends of the blocks along the avenues solid from property line to property line and at least several stories high to provide the desired end closure for the streets and the desired facade for the avenue. This will require modification to the open space requirements of the zoning ordinance. Open spaces on an urban avenue should not be located so that they destroy this facade.

Common Gardens

A proposal which comes directly from the residents themselves and which we had hoped for is "for the owners of the brownstones of a block (on a cooperative basis) to pool their backyards together to create a 'mews' with rear entrances." Wherever such a consensus exists it would be worth encouraging. Our plan for the West Side Renewal Area illustrates this idea in the block between 87th and 88th streets, Amsterdam and Columbus Avenues.

Another possibility for brownstone owners on either a cooperative or individual basis is to develop private walled entrance gardens along the street in front of those houses where the stoops have been removed. This kind of addition would be most welcome in the streetscape.

Street furniture

Street lighting and the whole vocabulary of street furniture should be explored; not only the design of such elements but the placement of them along the street as well. It has been put forward by some West Side residents and the Renewal Agency that the West Side Renewal Area be treated as a "test project for new design of street furniture." We think this is an excellent idea and recommend strongly investigation into the whole vocabulary of street furniture—its use and design.

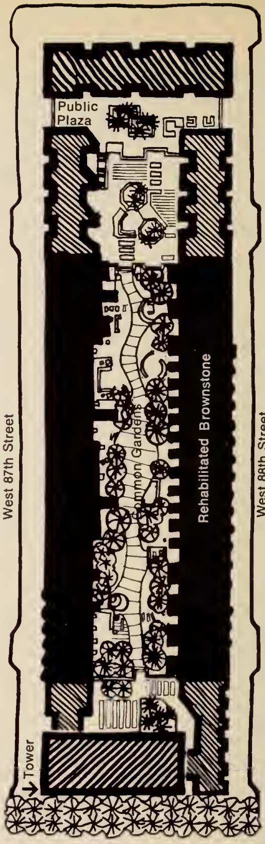
Cross-Avenue Plaza

On the lower end of Columbus Avenue between 88th and 90th Streets (the last stage to go into construction), we propose a center for the community which combines commercial, cultural and recreational facilities with an elevated plaza over the avenue. It would bind both sides of the project together and also establish a focus and sense of place for the whole community. Such a center would add to the identity of the community and could include such elements as a Puerto Rican Center, teen centers, indoor and outdoor swimming, markets, shops, eating and drinking establishments, library, clinics, etc.—many of the facilities wanted by the neighborhood and arranged in a way that would provide increased opportunity for meeting and socializing in a self-policing situation. Around the plaza and its groupings of facilities we have proposed a series of multi-dimensional structures which include within them facilities and open spaces **at different levels.** The school uses roofs for its playgrounds, stores and community center rooms open out into outdoor spaces at several floor levels and the plaza which extends across the avenue binds these various levels together. From the elevated outdoor spaces, staircases and ramps lead to ground level at streets and into interior commons. To achieve this of course will require use of air rights approval from the city.

This complex spatial system enables multi-purpose use of space—it penetrates the envelope of vertical space with open space use, it separates pedestrians from cars, it separates service elements from social elements (see later section for a more complete description).

Pedestrian bridges

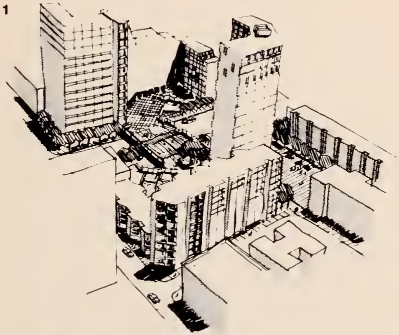
Another proposal which would add considerably to the liveliness of Columbus Avenue is to provide



Common Gardens
A proposal for the owners of the brownstones of a block (on a cooperative basis) to pool their backyards together to create a "mews" with rear entrances.

numerous connections between the sidewalk and the open spaces on top of the single story elements by means of outside stairways—and wherever possible to connect these elevated open spaces one to another by bridging over the side streets. By making these elevated spaces available for use and by treating them as sidewalks or connected plazas, a richness and depth could be added to the avenue which otherwise doesn't exist. The usable open space would then more nearly coincide with the visible open space.

1



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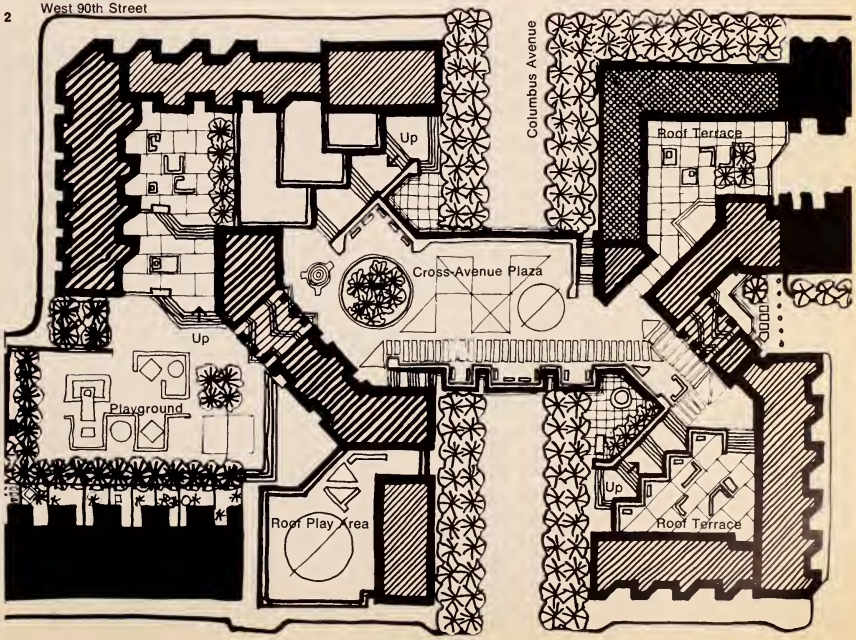


1

Overall View of Cross-Avenue Plaza and Community Center for West Side Renewal.

2

Cross-Avenue Plaza
A center for the community which combines commercial, cultural and recreation facilities with an elevated plaza over Columbus Avenue.

Mid-block openings

One additional proposal which is a modification of an Agency proposal and has local support is mid-block pedestrian ways. The blocks between Amsterdam and Central Park West are 800 feet long, and could well stand interruption. The connecting ways, however, should fall near the middle of the block and not near the ends of the block where they merely duplicate the existing sidewalk. This will assist climatologically as well as functionally.

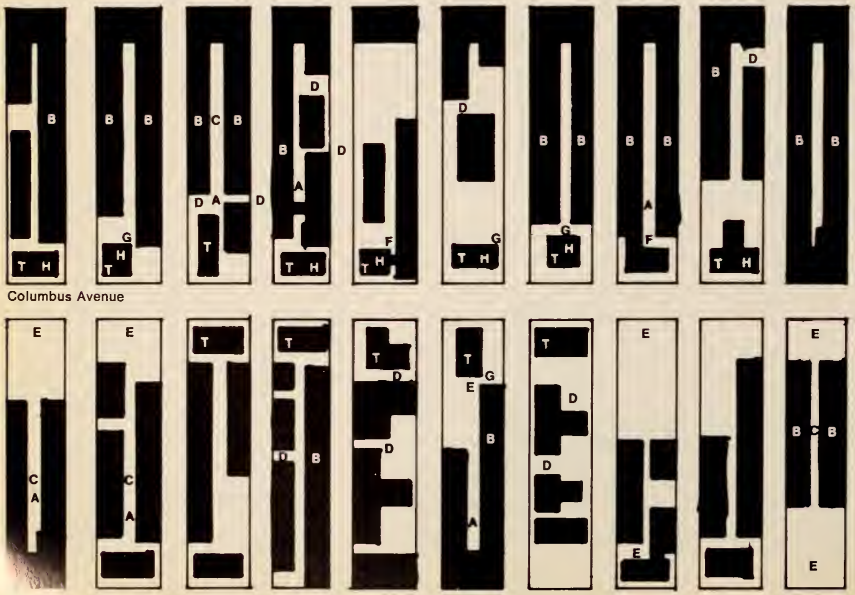
The influence of our proposals on the local microclimate and its "liveability" has been analyzed and our conclusions follow.

West Side Renewal Area in Relation to Local Climate

Central Park

↑

The large open space of Central Park to the east of this entire project. Wind speed increases over the park, turbulence decreases, humidity increases.



T: High-Rise buildings.

A
Examples of good winter shelter.

B
Breezeways as proposed added here could aid summer comfort.

C
Possible heat traps could be alleviated by proposed breezeways.

D
Good existing summer breezeways.

E
Winter intensification of wind and turbulence can be ended by proposed added units.

F
Good winter windbreaks.

G
Areas of increased turbulence.

H
Towers at the wrong end of the block for best winter wind circulation, can be improved by proposed walls.

Plantings proposed along avenues and streets aid in temperature control during hot season and serve as windbreaks during the winter storms.

Penn Station South

Penn Station South

Existing

Co-op development of 2820 families, about 7000 people. Six blocks of a central area on the West Side of Manhattan. Access to transportation, shopping, major entertainment is excellent.

Building land coverage, 25%. This includes several retained old buildings which add great charm to the area—3 churches, a parish house, and a hotel.

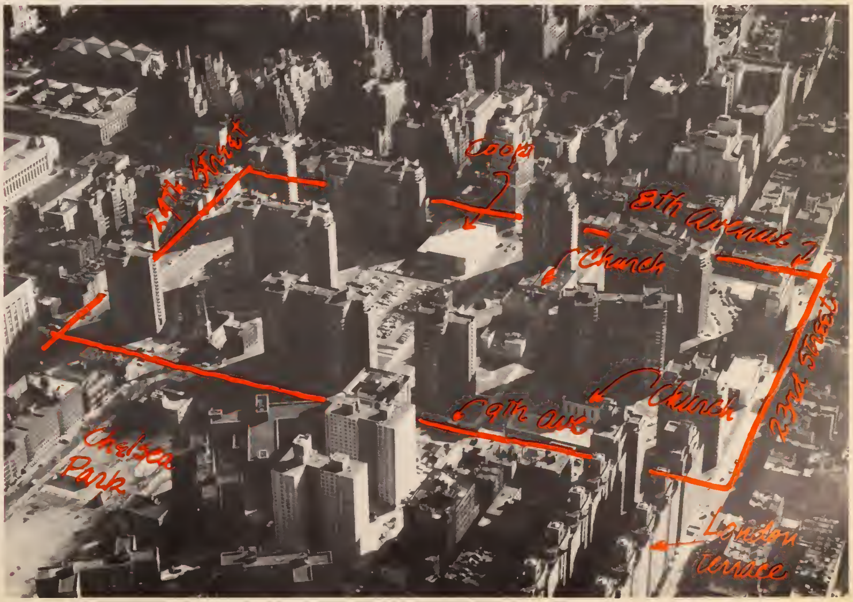
15% of land devoted to playgrounds, parking and circulation. 50% of land devoted to open spaces, occupied by lawns, trees and shrubs and flower beds.

Maintenance of the grounds, particularly in the interior, is excellent. The area has certain pleasant park-like characteristics. Standard building form is a cruciform tower. Two curving wide streets connect through the project, one was cut off.

Analysis

1. Visual

The area has park-like qualities which are very pleasant. The grounds are well kept and the preservation of the old church and other buildings has added qualities to the new buildings.
The areas along the avenues are less manicured and well kept and more open to encroachment from the exterior neighborhood. The cruciform building form has developed odd leftover pieces within which plantings are hard to maintain.
Views into the site are inviting. The views from the site to the old line of row houses along 29th Street and outward to the northeast to the towers of midtown Manhattan are extremely interesting.
The street scene, however, is fractured. The sense of enclosure in the open spaces seems lacking—relationships of entrances make them difficult to reach visually as well as actually. The towers themselves rising from the green lawns seem divorced from the pattern of the city.



Aerial

A large cyclone fence enclosed parking lot in the center of the project is visually unpleasant.

2. Recreational and Cultural Facilities

Many of the residents think these facilities are inadequate. There is no swimming pool which many inhabitants would like. Playgrounds for toddlers are inadequate and there have been requests for these to be separated from adult sitting areas. There have been requests for bicycle paths.

3. Relationship to Surrounding Neighborhood

A sense of estrangement and isolation from the surrounding neighborhood seems prevalent. There is considerable desire to be exclusive from the surrounding area which is thought to be populated by less desirable elements. On the other hand, considerable enthusiasm has been shown for more variety in the neighborhood—more shops, more and better movies, consistent demand for a Kosher delicatessen (there is actually one in the new Co-op store but it does not have the atmosphere apparently). A constant reference to the "Village" on the part of many residents seems to indicate that that is what they would like their neighborhood to be like.

4. Community Spirit and Involvement

There seems little real community spirit on a positive level although considerable efforts have been made. A real sense of internal alienation and isolation emerges in spite of the fact that this is a co-op. There is evidence to support the idea that the isolation of towers, the lack of focus in the open space, the inadequate functional uses for the large area of open spaces and the non-relationship with the surrounding community are in some measure responsible. One wonders why more effort is not made to really establish community groups and by modest increases in rent (no more than $1 per month would be needed) develop a real recreation and community program.

Proposals

Our proposal envisions reknitting Penn Station South into the neighborhood. Instead of towers in isolated locations within a large open space we suggest linking these along the street frontages by 6 story additions. These will span the cross streets (see sketch) which will pass under them. Arcades will permit access and ingress into the interior space treated as an urban courtyard.

Within the court, new recreational facilities would, we hope, be developed—a large semi-enclosed swimming pool, a plaza surrounding it. A new deck would cover the parking structure and, on this, lawns and trees would obliterate views of cars.

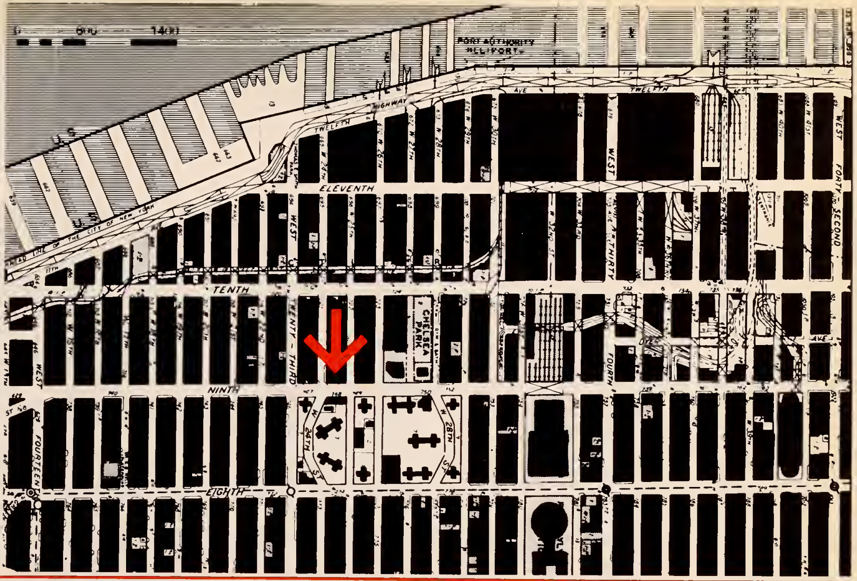
New playgrounds in special areas would enable a physical separation between mothers with children and adults seeking quiet. The noise from surrounding streets should be considerably ameliorated.

At lower levels of the 6 story units along the street fronts, stores and other community facilities could be built which would add liveliness and color and visual interest to the street scene.

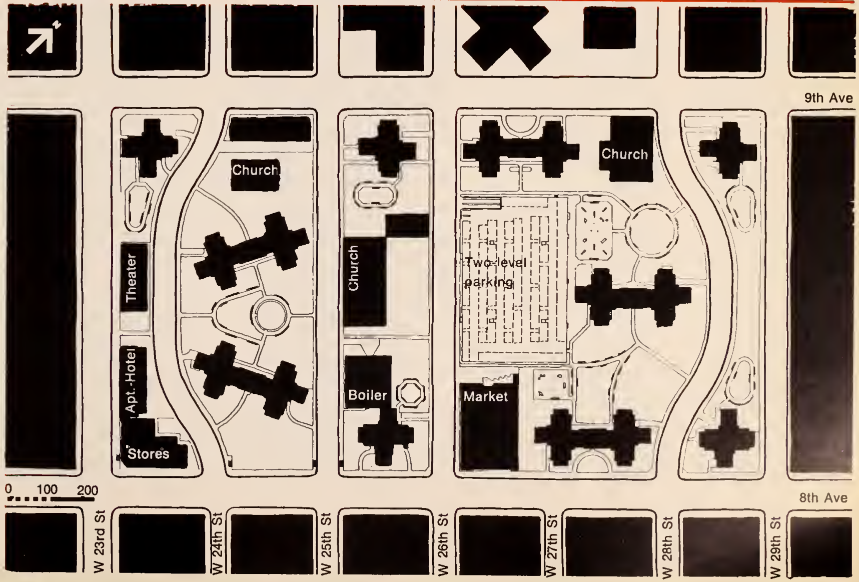
Such a major change in design and enlargement of the project would require a change in zoning mapping, and an amendment of urban renewal, controls to permit intensification of land use, as well as additional land cost reflecting such intensification. The increase in density, we believe, would be an improvement to the area. It would upgrade it as well as increase the range of people living here. More and more diversified shopping would be possible close at hand instead of going "uptown." Strolling in the evenings should become more possible, less frightening, especially as a result of the physical design of lighting under arcades and along major walkways.

This further development of the area would, of course, have to be staged and to involve the acquiescence as well as the enthusiasm of the present residents. We propose starting with some of the recreational facilities, notably the swimming pool, in the existing public park. Further facilities could be programmed and built as new buildings accrue and increased numbers of people become available to use and justify them, as well as support their economic viability.

Implementation will, of course, depend upon the granting of re-zoning, or variances, or rezoning as a special area. Such questions as density increases, increased land coverage, use of air rights, are reasonable points to be discussed, but the increases in facilities, the amelioration of noise, the increases in vitality and commercial facilities, and the greater variety of uses will, we believe, appeal to everyone.



1
Area Map
Penn Station South

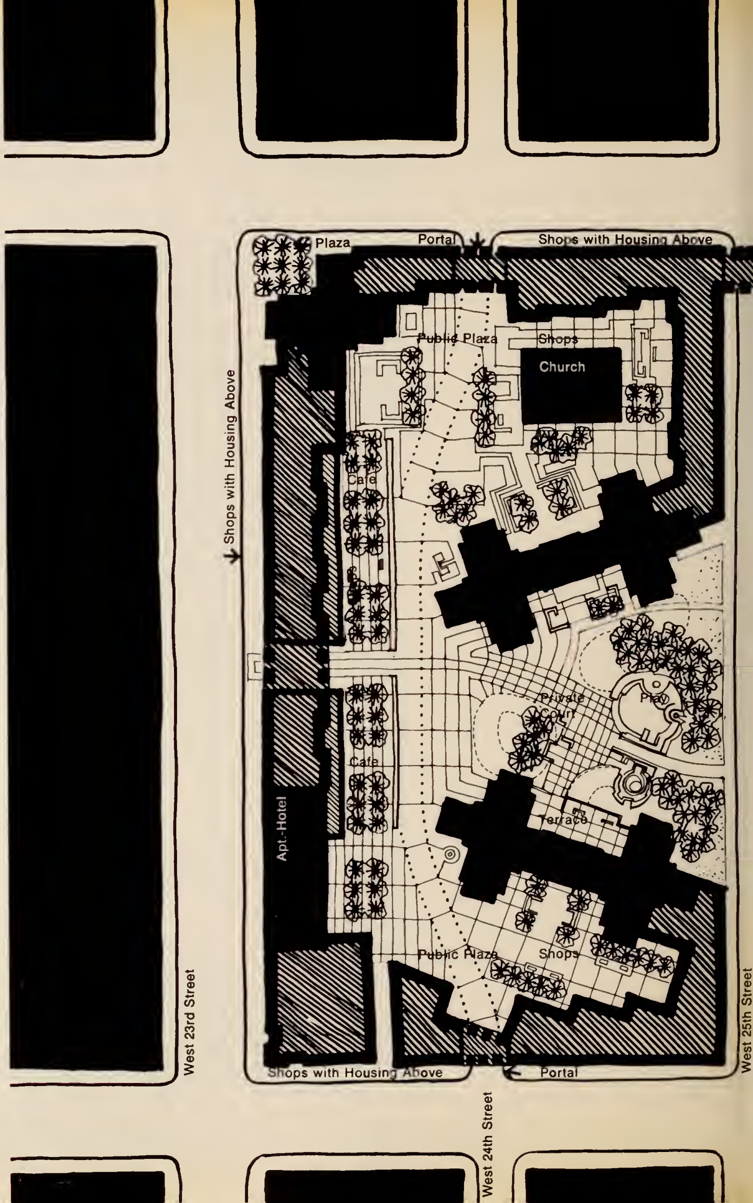


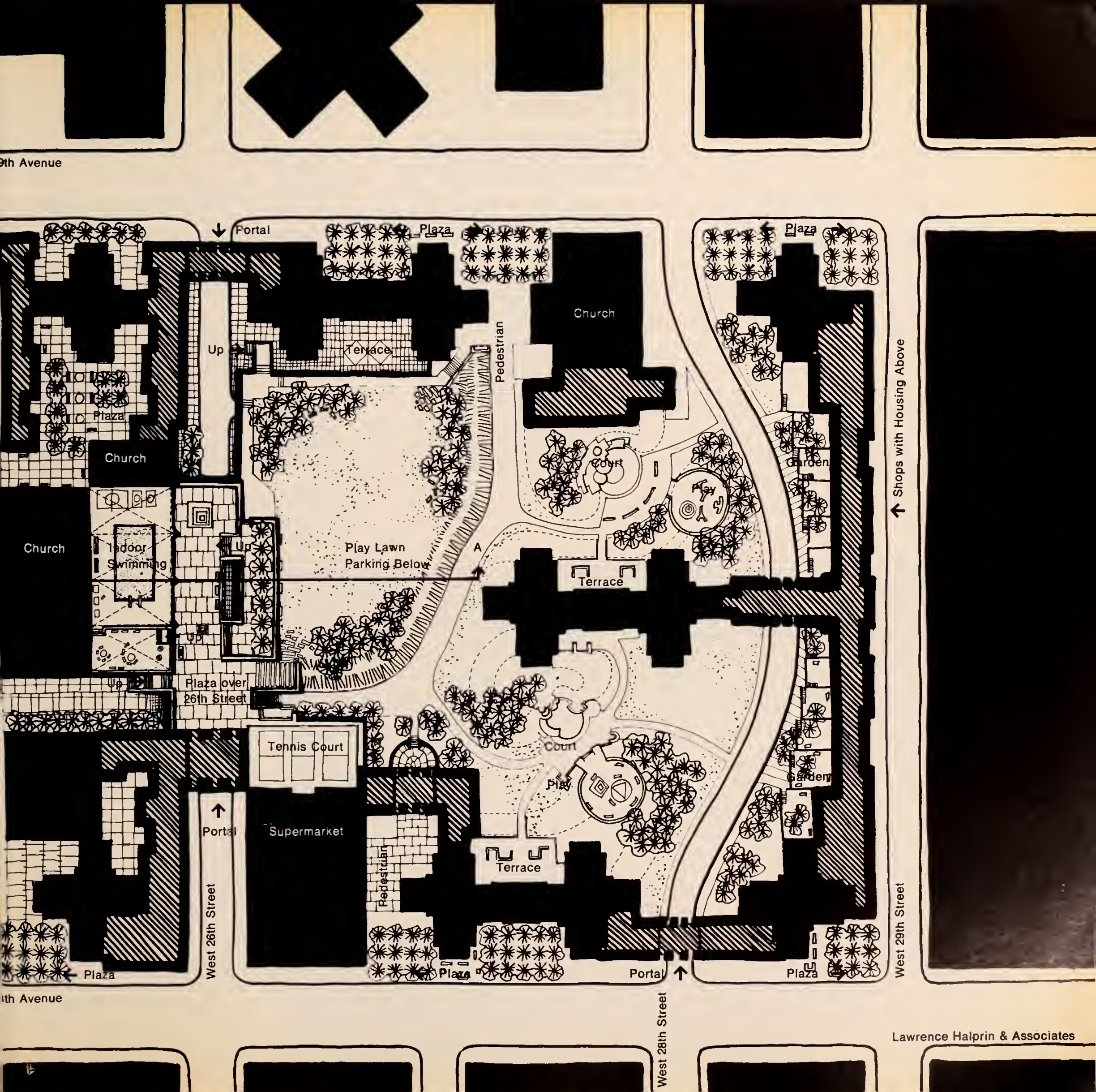
2
Existing Condition Plan

Proposal
Penn Station South

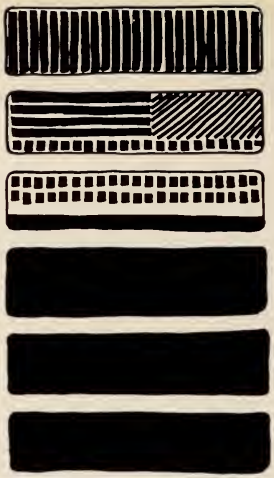
✚ Existing Building

▨ Report Proposal





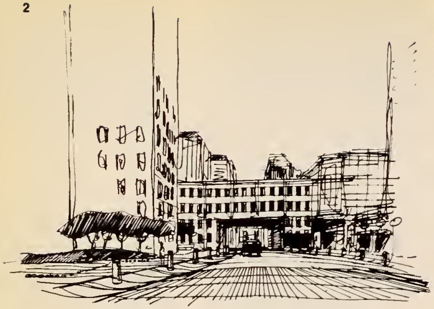
Lawrence Halprin & Associates



1

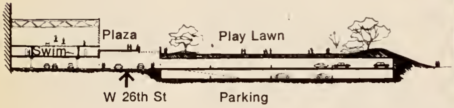
Existing Land Use Analysis Penn Station South

▥	Housing	15 %
☰	Old Buildings Churches, hotel	5.6%
▦	Developed Open Spaces Parking, Play	15 %
▨	New Buildings Commercial, etc.	4.8%
		40%-50%
■	Lawns, visual open space fenced in areas corners	50%-60%



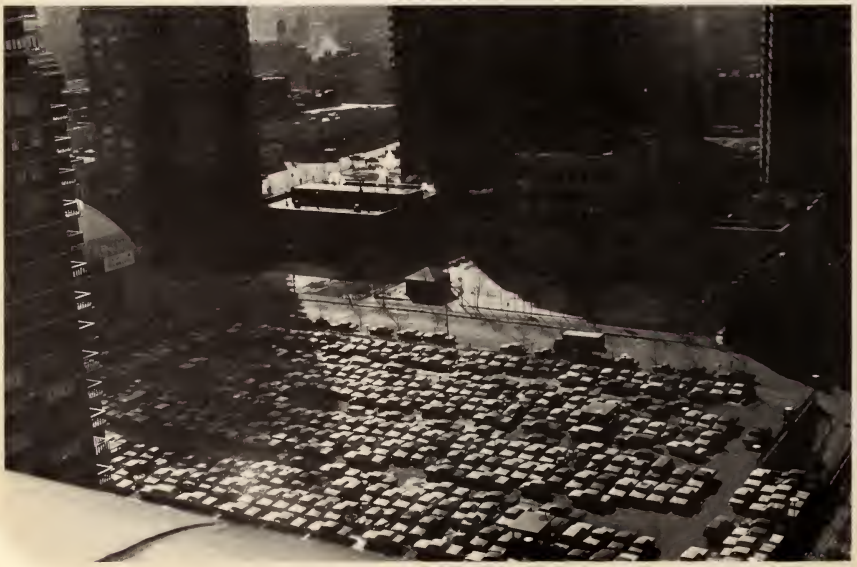
2

View from Inside of Project Showing Linking Units Spanning Cross Street



3

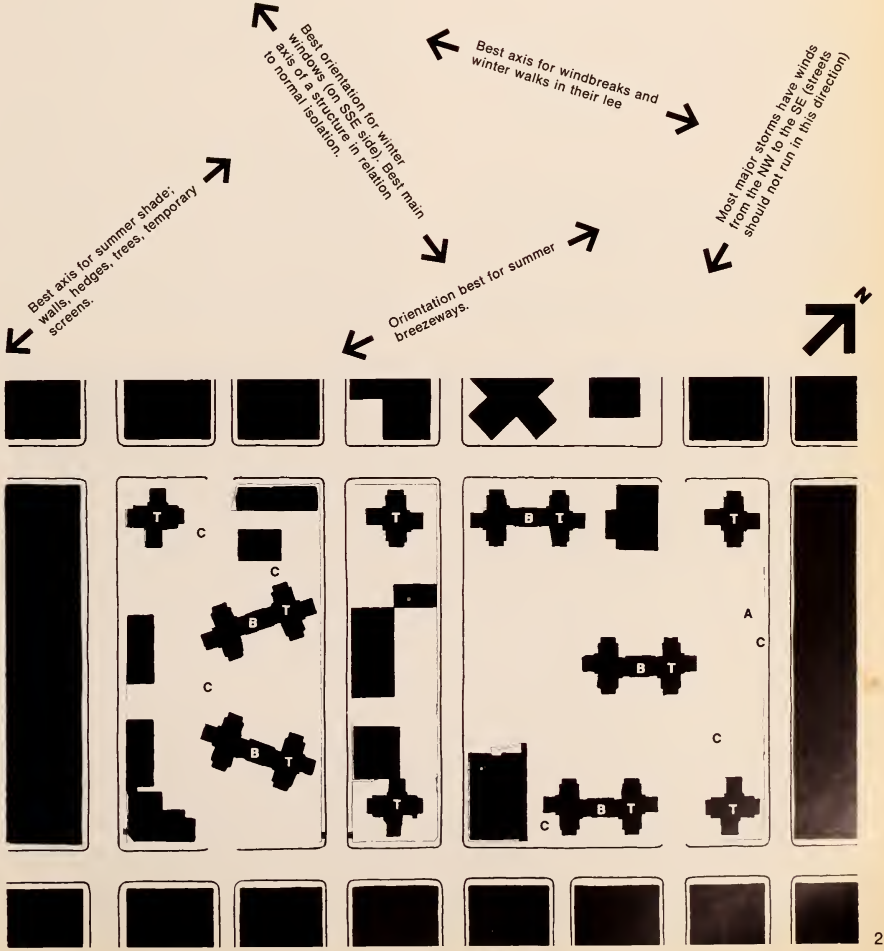
Section A-A Penn Station South Proposed Covered Swimming Pool and Play Lawn Over Existing Parking



4

Existing Central Open Space Used as Parking Lot

The influence of our proposals on the local microclimate and its "liveability" have been analyzed and our conclusions are illustrated on the following diagram.


Best orientation for winter windows (on SSE side). Best main axis of a structure in relation to normal isolation.
Best axis for windbreaks and winter walks in their lee
Most major storms have winds from the NW to the SE (streets should not run in this direction)
Best axis for summer shade; walls, hedges, trees, temporary screens.
Orientation best for summer breezeways.
N
T
B
C
A

Penn Station South Project in Relation to Local Climate

T: High-Rise buildings.

In general, a few large towers in place of many buildings increases wind speed. If towers are connected as proposed, wind will be reduced.

A
Open area between 28th and 29th acts as a wind funnel. This could be improved by walls and structures as proposed.

B
The five large towers all provide good winter windbreak in the leeside and some smaller areas of good summer cover. Low structures and walls as proposed intensify these beneficial effects.

C
Wind funnel effects at all these spots will be improved by the proposed additions.

Clumps of trees as proposed are climatically better than large areas of grass.

All these orientation directions are valid several degrees to each side of the charted one. For simplicity only the main axis is shown, but in actual practice any orientation within 20° of those shown should provide optimum results.

Bellevue South

Bellevue South

Existing

The Bellevue South project is located opposite Bellevue hospital between 1st and 2nd Avenues, and from 23rd to 30th Streets. The area originally consisted primarily of Old Law tenements with some institutional buildings. Most of the institutional buildings remain—the tenements were razed. The area was subjected more to a clearance program than to rehabilitation, which differentiates it from West Side Renewal. The area is partially cleared now. No new construction is underway as yet, although some buildings are at the end of working drawings, and planning is well underway in the southern section.

Bellevue South is in the mainstream of activity between downtown and the upper east side. It is a busy place. Transportation is excellent: there is North-South bus service on the Avenues and East-West bus service on 23rd and 34th Streets.

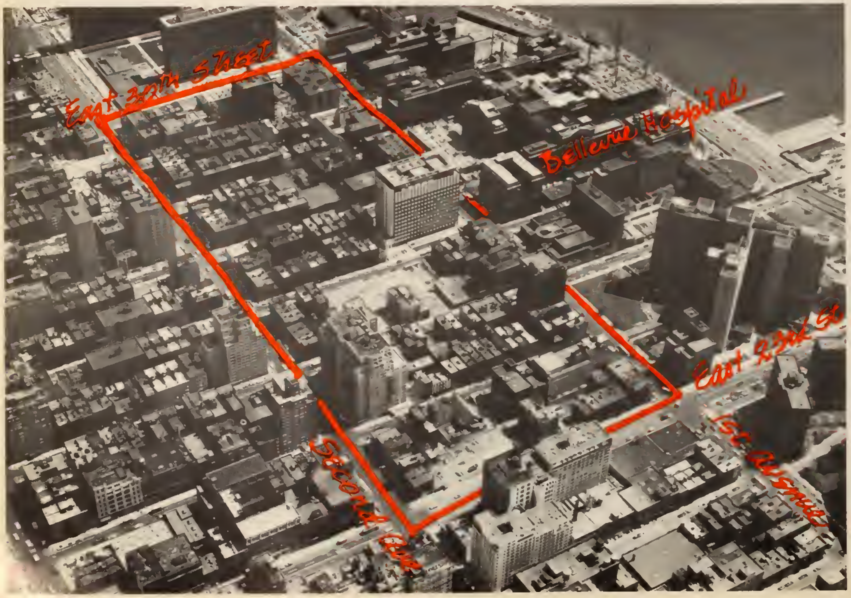
The Veterans' Hospital, NYU Medical Center, and Bellevue Hospital line up across 1st Avenue and establish a strong institutional character for the area. They provide some, though not much, visual open space but no public open space. Kips Bay Plaza is very open visually but not accessible to the public.

The closest public parks or plazas are Madison Square, across five major avenues; Gramercy Park, a key park across several major avenues and streets; and Stuyvesant Square, extremely pleasant but six blocks south. The East River is very near but has been so blocked off as to leave very little sense of its presence in the area.

Analysis

The basic Renewal Agency proposal is to create a superblock between 23rd and 24th, accessible by cul-de-sacs; one between 26th and 28th, accessible by a local service loop; and a modest open space within the 26-28th Street superblock. The remaining area is designed as buildings surrounding interior courts of varying size.

The major visual question planners have faced is to discover a method of integrating the various



Aerial

parcels into a unified whole which will have a visual integrity with the city as well.

The interior common open space between the 26-28th Street block seems to us inadequate in size and too inward oriented toward the project. It will say, "stay out," rather than, "come in." The service loop does not, we believe, offer relief to traffic and will chop up a space which can be put to better use (see our proposal).

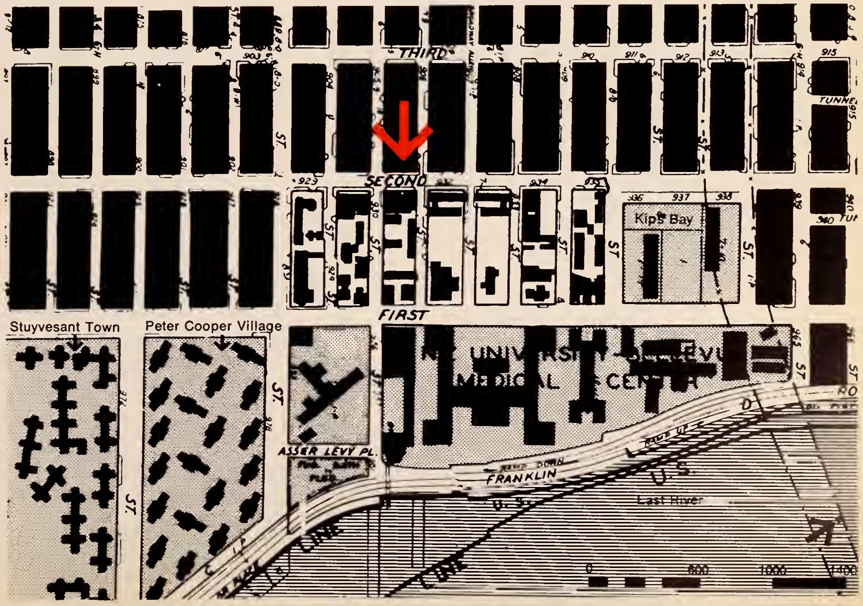
At the north end the project remains essentially part of the grain of the neighborhood. Some of the existing brownstones have been admirably renovated. The proposal, however, due to setback restrictions of the zoning ordinance, will establish too great a setback along 29th Street, as it will along 23rd, for visual continuity or for a facade along the street, which is desirable. Here is a case where, we believe, zoning should be modified.

Along 1st and 2nd Avenues the proposal (because of its discrete parcellation and some of the floor area ratio provisions of zoning) will crack open the avenue facade and fracture the grain of the city as it has already up and down many of the avenues.

The south end of the project exhibits as sensitive a response to siting and open space design as we have seen at work in the city. A real attempt has been made to maintain the urban grain, integrate the buildings with an existing church, and develop a sequence of interior handsome squares and recreation spaces. The area could benefit from an ability to move buildings out to the property line (which is not now possible because of zoning) and we so recommend.

The north end suffers from the great shift in scale between the existing row houses and Kips Bay. Some attempt to knit the two together could be made across the street by the introduction of townhouses or other street-oriented low scale elements.

The 1st Avenue proposals, with the exception of the block between 23rd and 24th, show nothing in the way of shopping or eating which will make the project difficult to knit into the neighborhood. The taller isolated towers (12-30 stories) proposed along the cross streets should, we believe, be relocated along the avenues, leaving the streets for lower six-story structures.



Area Map

Proposals

Since no community remains, the essential considerations are what can be created. The present scheme has merit in the design of the two blocks between 23rd and 25th where the individual buildings, linked one to another, form a major urban plaza area. Special consideration has been given to the church which remains within the plaza. As we have pointed out, it is the best example we have seen of coordinated design within a renewal area. However, the rest of the plan (because of the insular positioning of buildings, and the lack of definition of open space) lacks order and comprehensibility. The interior position of the park signifies, by implication, that it belongs to the project and therefore it would not serve successfully the larger neighborhood. Our studies have shown that reorganization can be done so that additional space may be captured for public use without lowering densities.

Our suggestions are based upon three principles:

Repositioning buildings collectively so that the block structure and street use is essentially reestablished. The gridiron system with its strongly defined functions is part of a major system in the city which provides circulation, access, air and building spacing. Departures from the traditional siting work only when they are accompanied by significant new formal organizations and/or a new street system. This has not been proposed nor should it be in this instance.

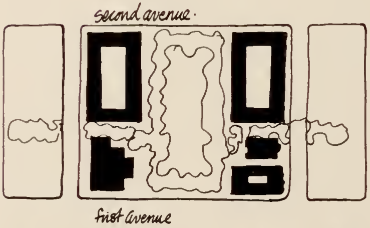
A consolidation of open space and strong definitions of use. Virtually all space in our proposal would fall into three categories:
a. Major public spaces—park and public plazas.
b. Well defined semi-private areas enclosed.
c. Circulation transitional or buffer zones.

Careful definition of areas is of prime importance. Public places need meaning beyond their mere existence—a crossroads—a green relief from a harsh density—a concentration of activities. Business establishments and restaurants should be developed along the avenues. Semi-private areas in the proposal are enclosed by low rise residential units. Grade changes, portals and other devices can provide clear but inoffensive barriers which demonstrate their exclusiveness. At the same time the public park provides a connection from avenue to avenue—at a location especially well accentuated by the Bellevue Hospital complex on one end and high rise housing towers at the other end.

We suggest general recreation and use in this neighborhood-oriented park. Opposite Bellevue Hospital we suggest a plaza canopied by trees under which benches would provide places for noontime lunches and games for hospital staff members. We would hope that restaurants would develop adjacent to it so that outdoor cafes can spill out onto the plaza. In addition we recommend a combined teenage recreation facility for games, for summertime dancing and concerts, and winter ice skating.

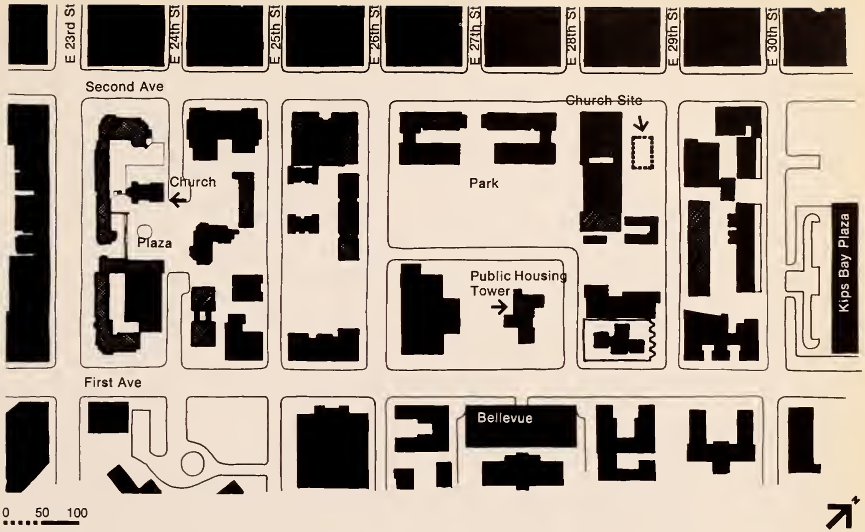
We regret that the low income housing tower in this area is so far advanced as to make its construction mandatory. We would have preferred to leave this area open as a part of the major plaza fronting the park and to have had the low income housing redistributed in small groupings throughout the project area.

Finally, we have diagrammed the open space sequence indicating the qualities of visual experience that can be expected when moving through the project once it is completed.



Bellevue South is an excellent example of what can be done in a city when individual designs are subordinated to a larger design concept - a major urban place can be created with great advantages to both residents and other city dwellers. When the place of a building is carefully defined and part of a larger idea the demands are less on that building in terms of individual excellence.

1



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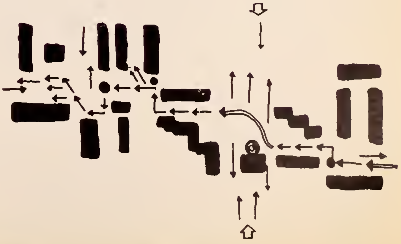


1
Renewal Agency Proposal
Bellevue South

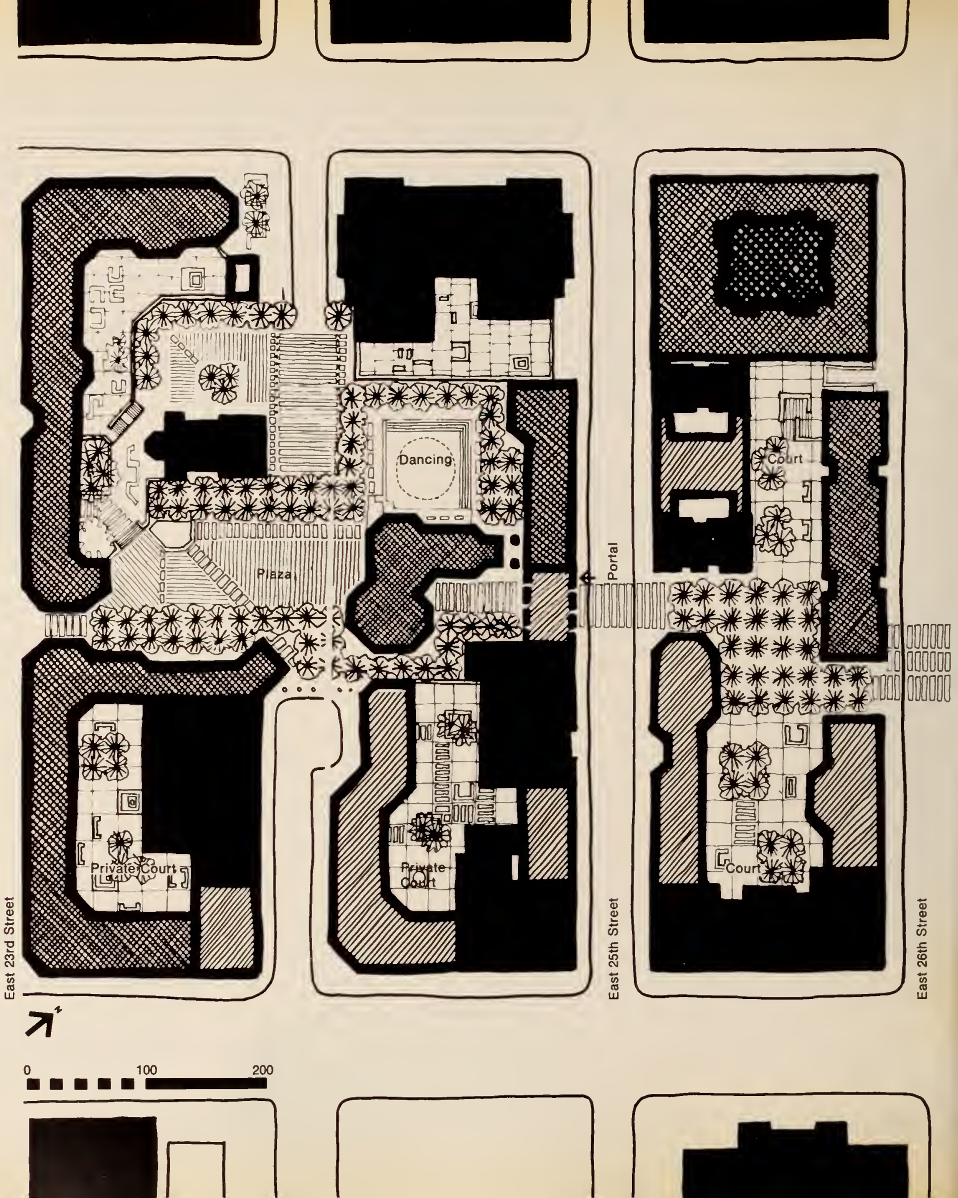
2
An analysis of the movement sequence through the open space network proposed at Bellevue South.

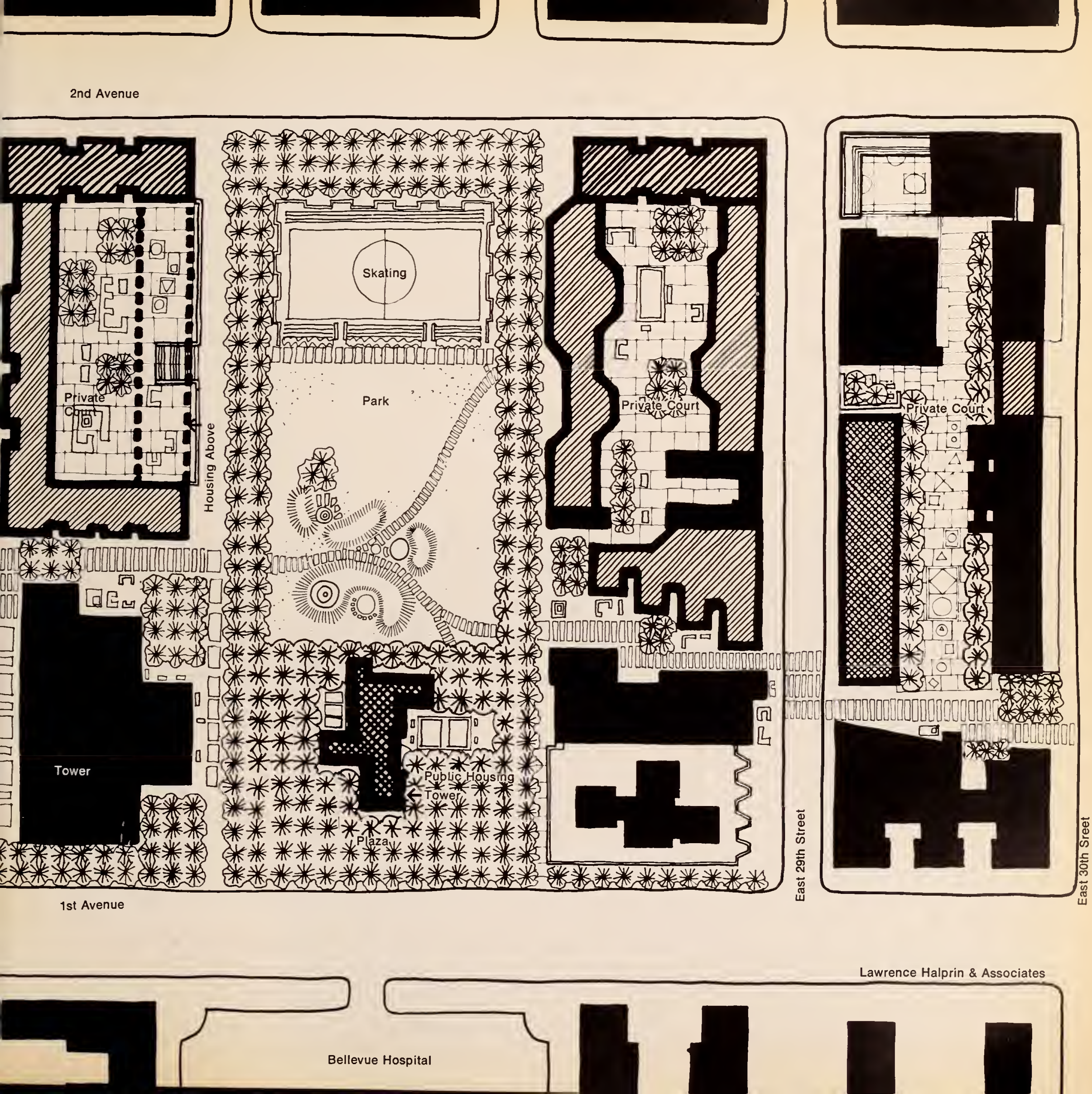
Proposal
Bellevue South

▩ **Proposed Renewal Agency**

▨ **Report Proposal**

■ **Existing Buildings**





Lawrence Halprin & Associates

Tompkins Square

Existing

Tompkins Square area is a quiet place. It is out of the mainstream and traffic generated by the avenues is little felt here. First Avenue is half a mile to the west and Con Edison and Stuyvesant Town form a barrier on the north. The East River is a short distance beyond the Jacob Riis Houses, but there is little sense of its being there either from the street level or from the roof terraces of the low buildings.

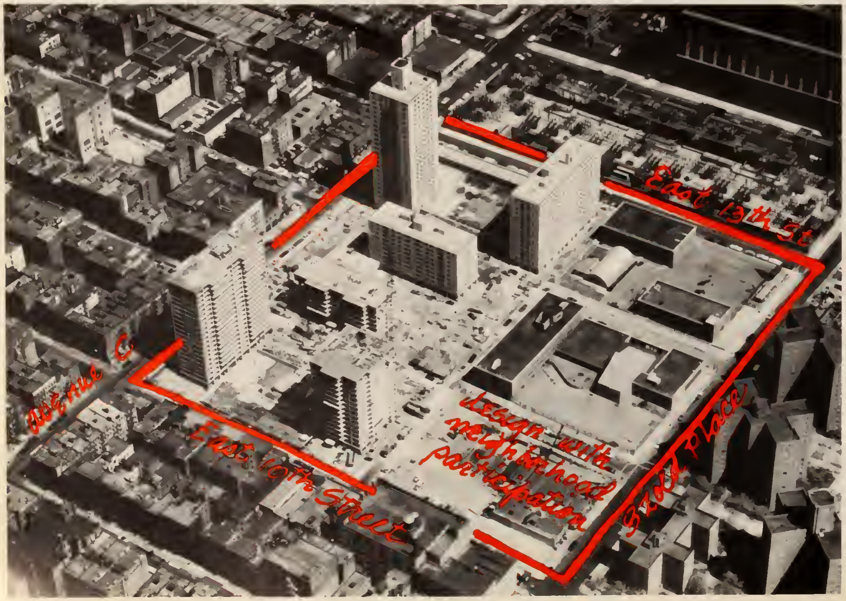
For all its isolation, however, the neighborhood is by no means a "nothing" place. Tompkins Square Park, a block away, is a classic square, both visually and socially. It functions in the very best sense as **an actual center for an actual** neighborhood. The visual structure of the neighborhood is made up of 5-6 story tenements tight together, surrounding the square. To the east, redevelopment over the years has eliminated the tenements and replaced them with towers in grass. Tompkins Square project is a departure from these earlier housing attempts but is still a tower system (rising out of one story parking structures) set into an existing neighborhood structure of a different form. What it does do is attempt a beginning of a 3-dimensional network of spaces. For this it should be commended. The roofs **are** used and a start has been made towards a mixing of housing types and income levels. In addition, the binding ground element is an interior mall. All of these are, unfortunately, tentatively done and could be carried further.

Land coverage in the project is approximately 40%, but if one eliminates the single story garage structures the coverage drops to nearer 13%. Density is approximately 385 persons per acre. The project is not large, being only three half-blocks joined together. It is divided—half lower middle income, half middle income. Fronting on Avenue C and linking the two halves of the development is a single story commercial structure.

Analysis

1. Visual

The most striking change in the visual structure



Aerial

of the neighborhood is the change in streetscape. Overly broad sidewalks backed up by long reaches of blank wall are in sharp contrast to the multitude of doorways and windows fronting on the traditional 12-15′ sidewalk. The buildings draw back from the edge of the site and fail to define the street or public space. The result is too much undistinguished open space, unclear as to purpose. The varied shapes and sizes of the several buildings are a commendable attempt to establish identity, but the "arranging" of individual buildings of such bulk on an open site in this manner creates the effect of a monument. When this design technique is applied generally to the cityscape, it is extremely disruptive.

2. Recreation and Cultural Facilities

Tompkins Square Park is the focal point of the neighborhood. By its occupancy and use it appears to satisfy young and old alike. Immediately to the east of the project is the delightful Jacob Riis Plaza and beyond it, across East River Drive along the river is East River Park, large enough for some field sports. Greenwich Village with all its attractions is within a mile to the west.

There are three play areas in the project, one on the roof terrace of the lower income portion and two on the ground. Five of the six apartment structures contain hobby or community rooms, and the single story garage structure of the middle income group contains an indoor swimming pool. On the roofs of both garage structures are garden terraces.

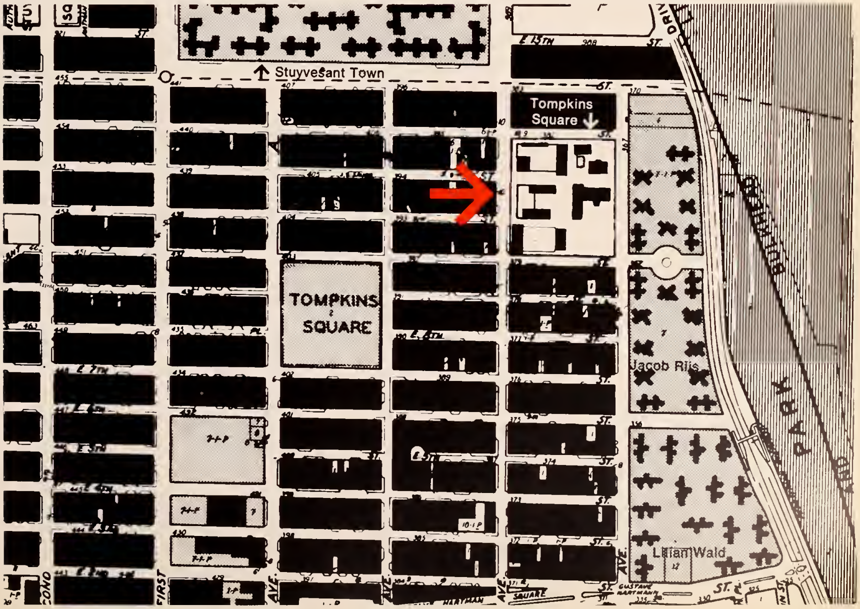
3. Relationship to the Surrounding Neighborhood

The visual relationship of the project to the surrounding neighborhood is still one of isolation. Not so extreme as in earlier projects, still too great.

Socially, it is unfortunate that the community and hobby rooms are not brought together in a community way along with the shops and play areas to create a place that would be interesting as well as useful where project residents and neighborhood residents could meet naturally in the course of their daily activities.

4. Community Spirit and Involvement

What the community spirit or involvement of the



Area Map

new residents will be it is too soon to know, since some of the buildings are (at the time of this review) just being occupied and others are still under construction. One can assume, however, that the fence now separating the middle income group from the lower income group will do little toward fostering a sense of community within the project itself.

Proposals

One of the first problems to undertake is the re-creation of the streetscape. A principal means of accomplishing this would be to provide stalls and other low overhead commercial space along the sidewalks against the blank walls of the garage structures and in the corner between the garage structures and the towers where there is unused space. This would accomplish two aims —one, the provision of “seed bed” space for marginal businesses to develop, and two, orient the project outward to embrace the neighborhood and introduce some actual life into otherwise “dead” space. Along with sidewalk planting of double and triple rows of trees, these measures would remedy, to considerable degree, the present condition of alienation.

The roof terraces atop the garage structures are a splendid idea. Like an interior court they provide a very good means of getting away from the sound and the activity of the street when one desires. They also provide a vantage point from which one can observe the activity of the street. These terraces would be more inviting and would function better as places if there were more connections to the ground and if the purpose of the terrace were more clearly stated by the design. There is the opportunity within these terraces to create small green environments of jewel-like quality in rich contrast to the street below. As of the moment they are cluttered by “planters,” chopped into small pieces and almost inaccessible from the towers.

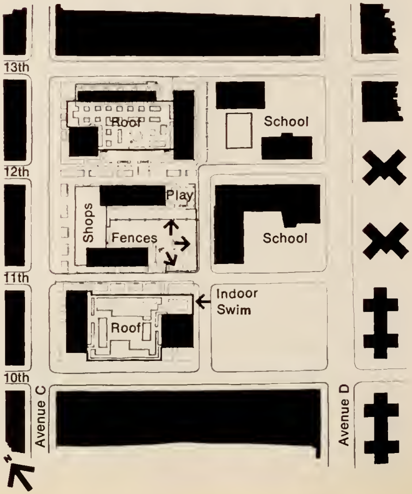
The central open space shared by both income groups, now scheduled for lawn with a fence in the middle, should be developed in conjunction with shops as a center for the neighborhood. It can combine, on the ground floors of the two facing buildings, the community and hobby rooms for the entire complex and indoor play space for the children. The outdoor area should be developed for adult sitting and children’s play, directly related to the shopping and recreation facilities.

It would seem most desirable to develop small private courts at the entrances to the studios both on the street level and on the terrace level. These small additions would add a dimension to the development that does not now exist, and make them usable for the occupants.

The former street areas that pass through the project should be treated as public malls in a straightforward way. The entrances from Avenue C should be embellished by planting or other means and their design should clearly state their purpose. Expanding into the neighborhood, the vacant block between 10th and 11th Streets from Szold Place to Avenue B should be developed, possibly as a park, but in all events as the **joint decision of the neighborhood.** The possibility that exists here for local involvement in shaping the local environment may seem unconventional but the opportunity should not go unexplored.

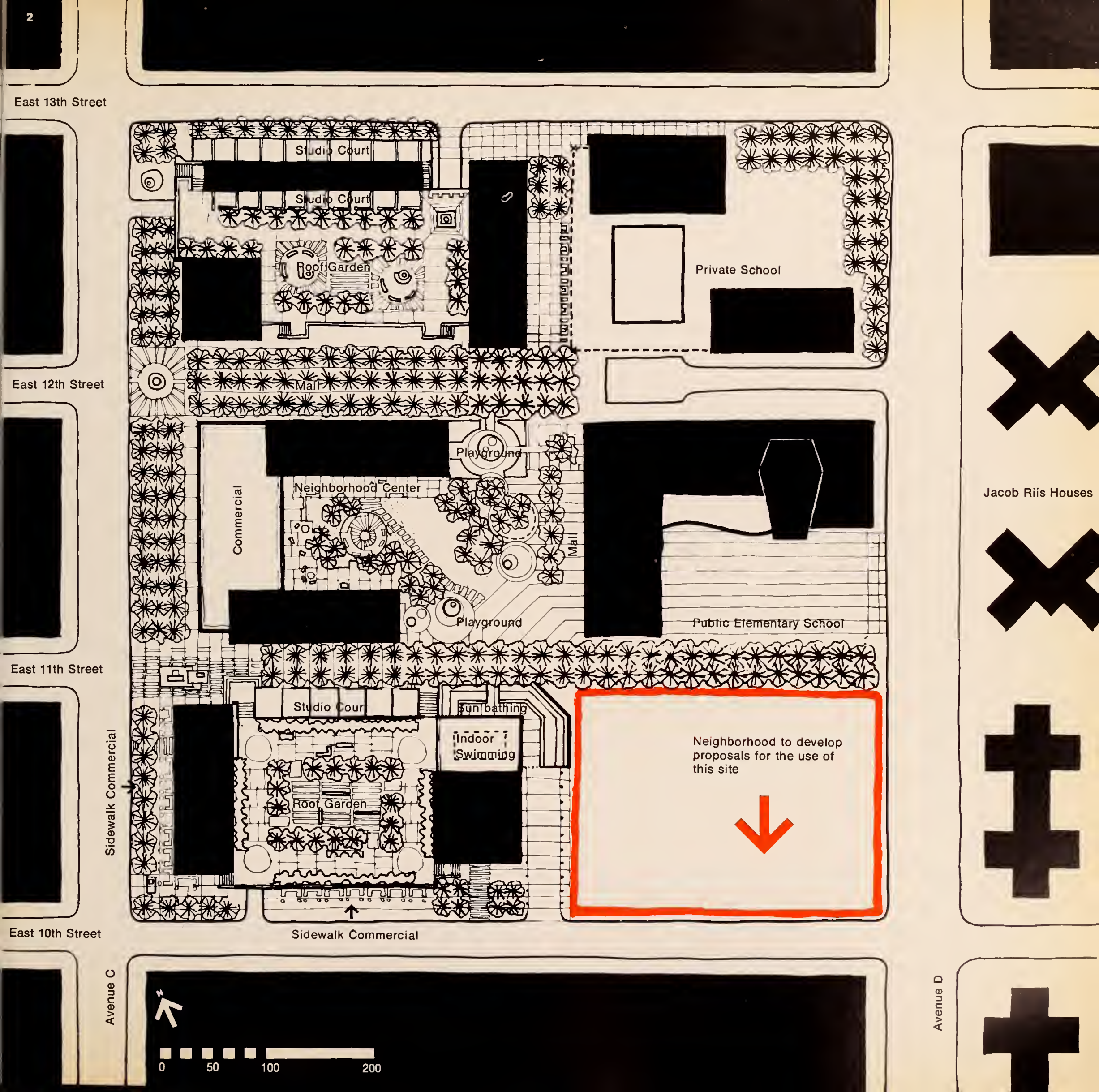
Our proposal here is not to design a park! Instead, we suggest using some of the techniques recomended in Part II of this report and particularly the encounter group to discover what the neighborhood wants and involve everyone, including the designer, in the development of the program. In that way we believe a demonstration of our basic approach to design will emerge.

1



1
Plan Tompkins Square
Existing Condition

2
Proposal
Tompkins Square


East 13th Street
Studio Court
Studio Court
Roof Garden
Private School
East 12th Street
Mall
Playground
Neighborhood Center
Commercial
Mall
Jacob Riis Houses
Playground
Public Elementary School
East 11th Street
Studio Court
Sun bathing
Indoor Swimming
Neighborhood to develop proposals for the use of this site
Sidewalk Commercial
Roof Garden
East 10th Street
Sidewalk Commercial
Avenue C
Avenue D
0
50
100
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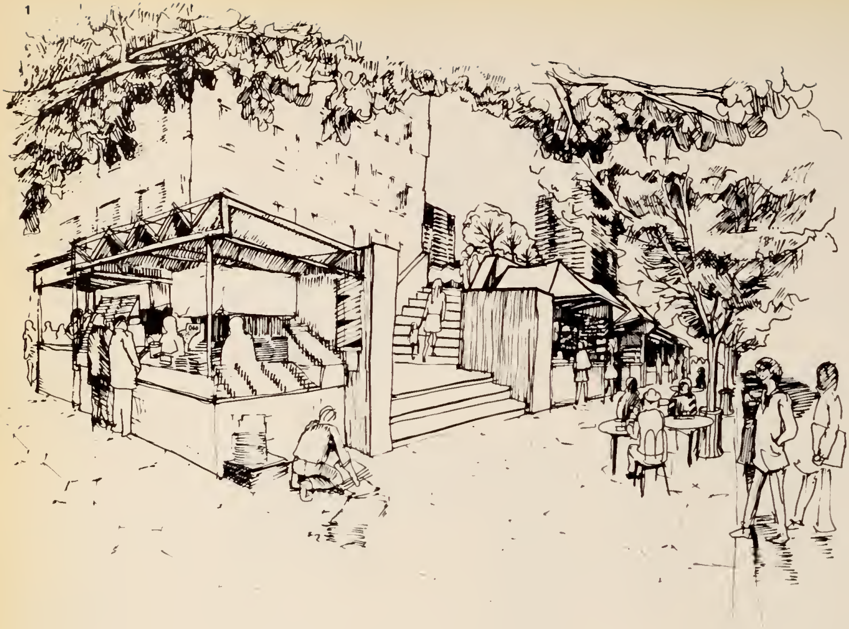
1



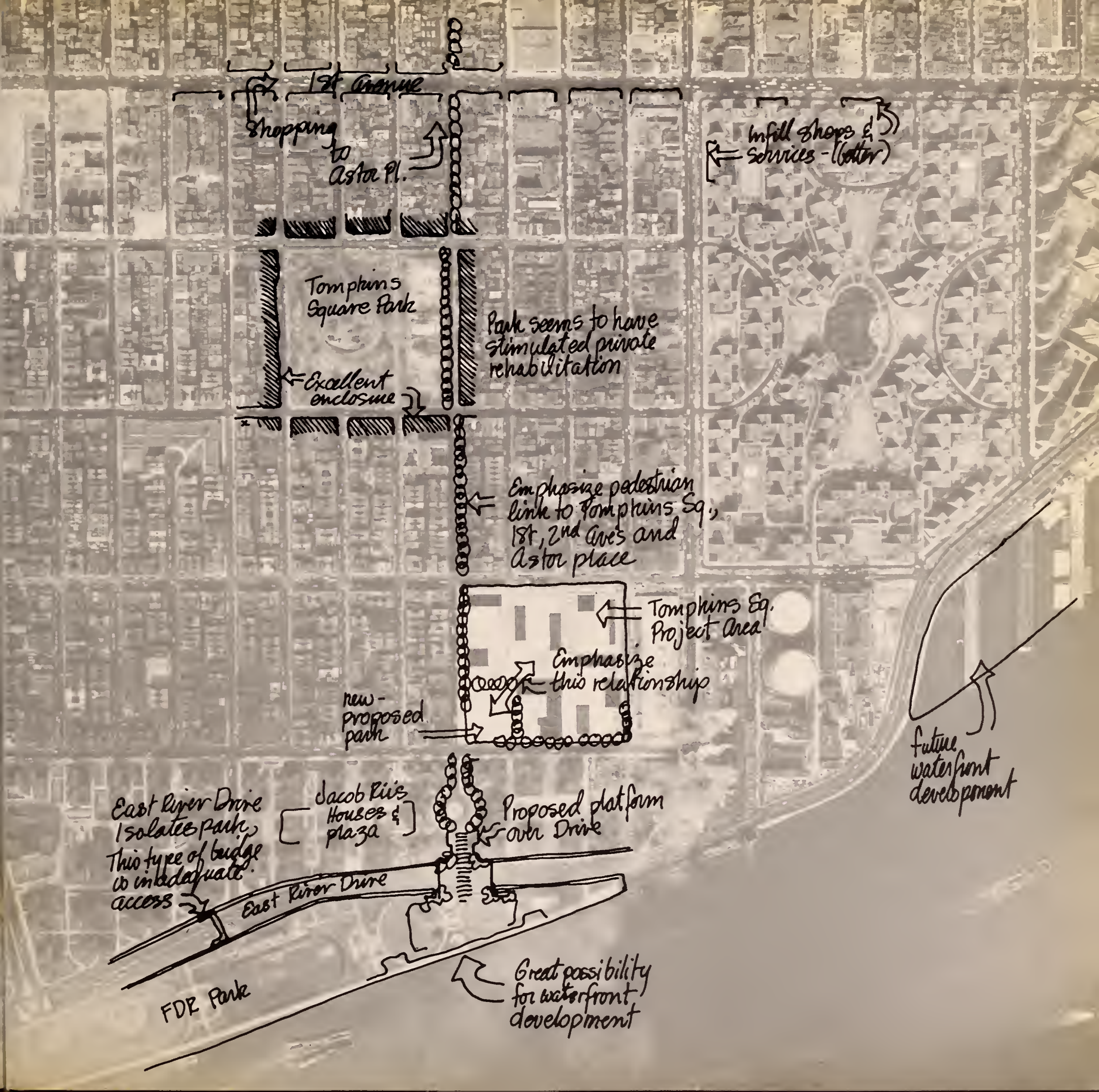
2

1
Sketch along East 10th Street showing proposal for enlivening street facade and bringing small scale commercial enterprises into the area.

2
View down East 12th Street Mall

3
Open Space Analysis
Tompkins Square

Connection to East River and East River Park should be improved by decking over a considerable portion of East River Drive in a manner similar to Carl Schurz Park. This connection would open up, and make accessible a valuable recreation facility that is now underused.


1st avenue
Shopping to Astor Pl.
Infill shops & services - (later)
Tompkins Square Park
Park seems to have stimulated private rehabilitation
Excellent enclosure
Emphasize pedestrian link to Tompkins Sq., 1st, 2nd Aves and Astor place
Tompkins Sq. Project Area
Emphasize this relationship
new-proposed park
Jacob Riis Houses & plaza
Proposed platform over Drive
East River Drive Isolates park, This type of bridge is inadequate access
East River Drive
FDR Park
Great possibility for waterfront development
future waterfront development

Cadman Plaza

Cadman Plaza

Existing

Cadman Plaza project is located adjacent to one of the most beautiful residential neighborhoods in all of New York—Brooklyn Heights. Few neighborhoods anywhere can surpass the charm of these quiet residential streets or match their views of New York Harbor and the Manhattan skyline.

The land on which the project now stands never reached the high level of development attained a block or two away partly because of the blighting effect of the Fulton Street "El" which ran along the eastern edge.

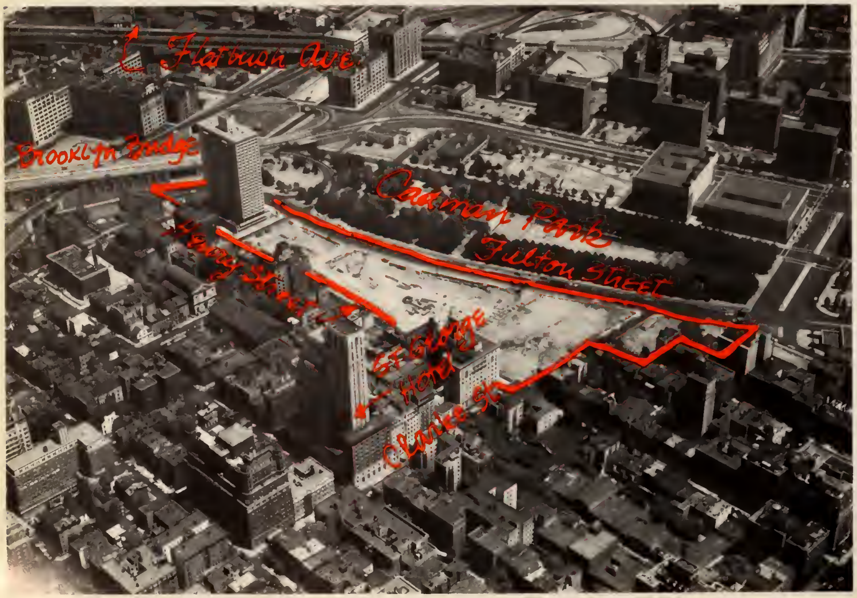
The neighborhood itself declined somewhat over the years, but the last decade or so has seen a reversal of that trend and a renewed interest in private rehabilitation due, in some measure, to the removal of the El.

Subway transportation to and from Manhattan or into Brooklyn is excellent. Both the IND and the IRT serve the area.

The scale of Brooklyn Heights is set by 3 and 4 story townhouses with small front gardens and narrow tree-lined streets, some dating back to the early part of the 18th century. Nearer the project site, however, are many structures of larger scale, namely the St. George Hotel, 11 stories high immediately across Henry Street from the project and rising to about 30 stories at one point on the block. A number of 6-10 story apartment buildings are scattered in the immediate neighborhood of the project. One of the buildings razed at this site was the Ovington Building (in which the famous spy Colonel Abel had his studio). The Mason Mint Building is planned to be rehabilitated for artists' studios.

The economic level of the area is mostly middle and upper income.

To the East across Fulton Street is Parkes Cadman Plaza—a monumental park. Traffic on Fulton Street, however, inhibits crossing over from the project area and the design character of the park itself does little to encourage active use by the neighborhood—it is simply a monumentally designed open space.



Aerial

Analysis

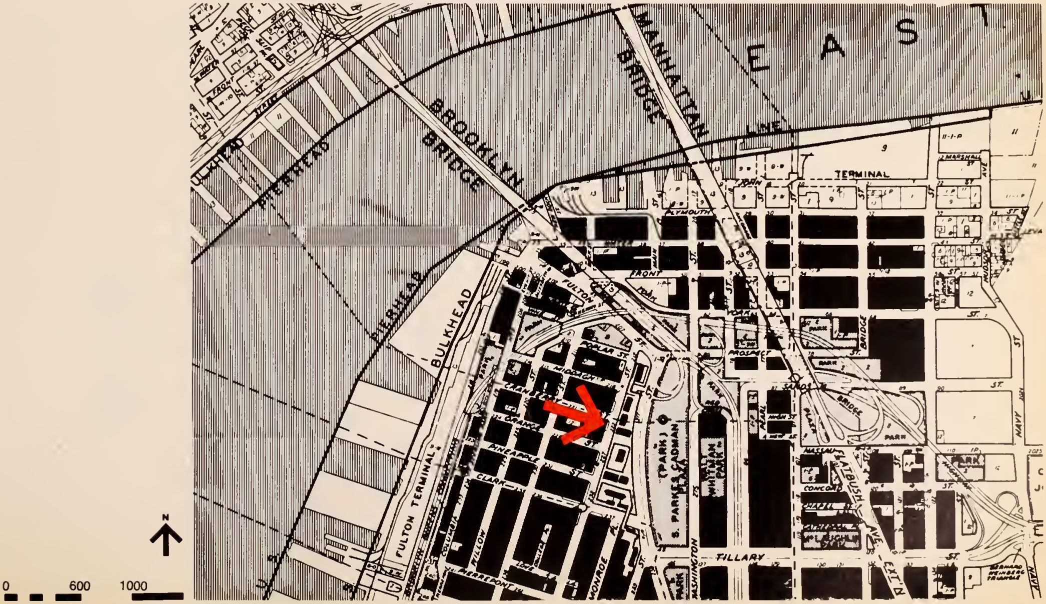
With the exception of the south end, the project is either completed or under construction. It is the only project other than West Side Renewal to provide a range of housing types. The income range of housing includes low, middle and high. Three streets have been closed and a superblock created. There are groups of 2 and 3 story townhouses, a 13 story apartment block and 3 apartment towers ranging in height from 27 to 33 stories. The apartment towers are set on low platforms of 23′ height or less which are pulled back from the property lines; the influence of zoning.

On the project side of Henry Street, there is a fairly continuous facade made up of these platform walls and the rear or end walls of the townhouses. Pineapple Street has been closed to vehicles and will be treated as a promenade with shops flanking it. Clark Street and Middagh Street are both bridged at the platform level for pedestrians. This linking of the buildings at the upper level is an admirable start toward a multi-dimensional structure for the city. Along Fulton Street the project has no continuous facade.

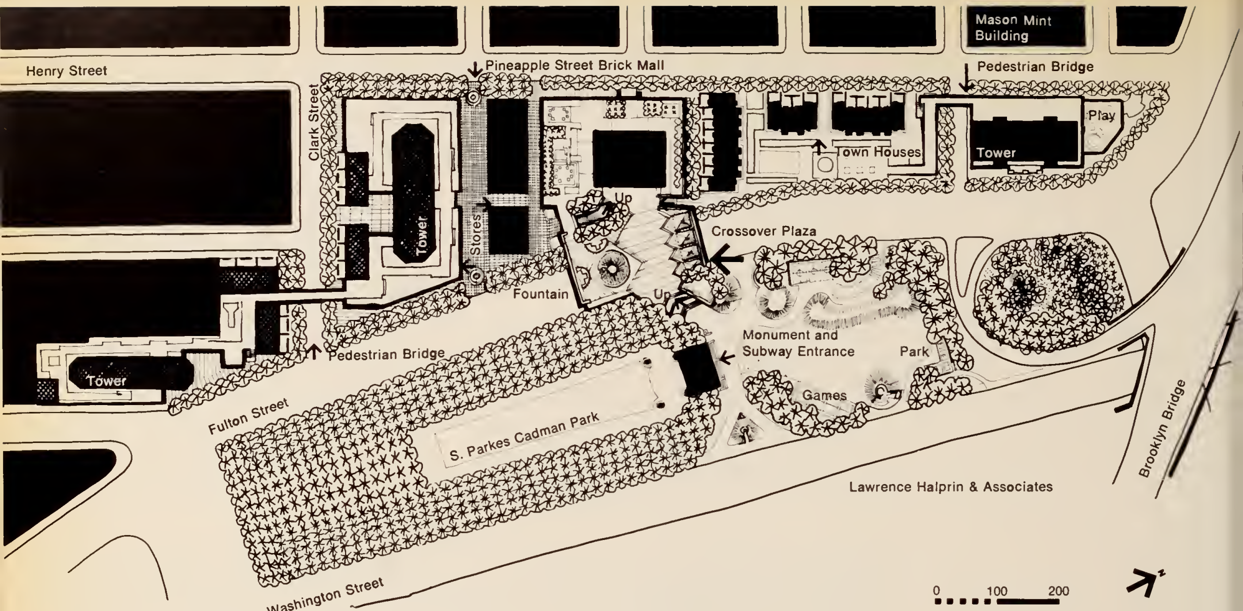
A commendable effort has been made at the south end of the project to retain some vestige of life at the sidewalk level by facing the townhouses to the streets. Throughout most of the project, however, this has not been the case. The streets have lost their containment or their activity or both. A criticism that applied to Tompkins Square applies here to Cadman Plaza—the overly wide sidewalks backed by long reaches of blank wall behind which rise solitary towers. Visually, for this reason, the project sits island-like at the edge of the neighborhood.

Proposals

As much as possible should be done to recreate a streetscape compatible with this essentially residential neighborhood and to make the sidewalk into a pleasant experience again. Where the sidewalks are wider than typical for the neighborhood, sidewalk business enterprises should be encouraged to locate. This is particularly true on Henry and Clark Streets; where this is not feasible or where sidewalks are more nearly typical in width, planting in the vernacular of the neighborhood should be attempted.



Area Map



**Proposal
Cadman Plaza**

■ **Completed Buildings**

▨ **Proposed Buildings**

Proposed crossover plaza links the lower income housing with Cadman Park, the north end of which is converted into an active recreational area. This linkage over Fulton Street provides direct pedestrian access from the subway to the project.

Our reactions to Cadman Plaza are mixed ones.

On the positive side, design has been good, the use of decks has lifted open space use into the third dimension. Mixture of building types and income levels is a firm step toward complexification. The extension of Pineapple Street into the heart of the project as a ground level shopping street is admirable. Quite clearly views from above the 6th floor are superb up and down the East River. We propose a major cross avenue plaza which will bind this project across to Parkes-Cadman plaza and a redesign of that park to incorporate play areas, recreation facilities, and other facilities **desired by the neighborhood!**

On the debit side the project seems simplistic. The scale is unrelated to the neighborhood, the low platforms isolate rather than integrate the towers with the street. The street level is barren. The setbacks are too great. But mainly the tone is an anticomplex one in both form and use.
It seems too simple. We wonder how it will admit for change, how intricacies of living will penetrate the project, what assets this project will add to its surroundings. How does it fit the wonderful qualities of this neighborhood which has as much "charm" as any place in New York. Just **because** Cadman Plaza is well done (within the present vernacular) makes us wonder about the vernacular itself. We must wait and see.

Dayton Towers

Dayton Towers

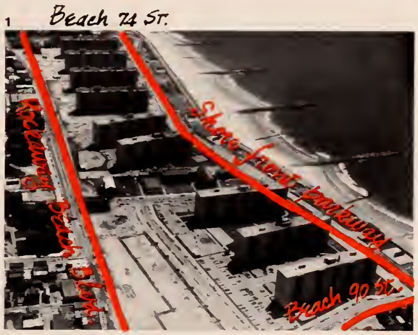
Existing

On Rockaway Beach, bounded by beach and ocean on one side and Jamaica Bay on the other; served by a generous network of roads and transit as links to downtown Manhattan.

Developed originally as a second home seaside resort area, spurred by the railroad built in 1897, since 1930 the area has declined. Clearance started and continued in 1945-56 period. New projects are beach-resort oriented. Development of slab towers in open space, largely at right angles to the ocean. Densities are low. Area of housing divided from beach by highway.

The climate and environment in this project are so different from the others and should have had such an influence on site planning and design because of their influence on comfort that we have made special detailed studies on the subject.

1



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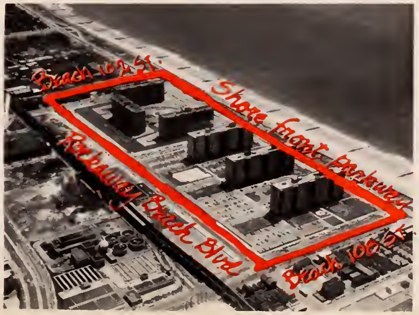


1
Aerial
Dayton Towers East

2
Aerial
Dayton Towers West

1. Geomorphology

Rockaway Beach, on which the Dayton Tower project is located, is a migrating sandbar near the west end of the Long Island Barrier Beach. These beaches are the result of wave action and long-shore currents which have thrown up sand originally deposited as outwash by the Laurentide Ice Sheet, which terminated a few miles to the north of the present beach. Unfortunately this beach is in a very unstable situation, geologically speaking. Since 1897 the area from west of 116th Street has decreased by about 230 acres or about 12%. Only extensive and costly corrective measures have preserved the rest of the beach from the sea.

2. Original Biotic Community

Rockaway Beach is a typical recent strand community. The original vegetation was described as "a sparse grass growth" but it seems likely that there were also a few herbaceous annuals and some hardy shrubs. The fauna was mainly restricted to birds and marine life. (Rockaway Beach is still a favorite spot for shell collectors.) Since this is a very recent surface it has a coarse, porous texture subject to wind erosion and excessive salinity. The soil cover is only rudimentary, and native vegetation is of necessity scanty.

3. Microclimate of Rockaway Beach

As expected, there are considerable differences between the climate here and in Manhattan. Rockaway Beach has mean monthly temperatures of up to 2° cooler. There is 1.5 inches less precipitation during a normal year. The average snowfall is 28.5 inches compared to 30.3 inches in Manhattan. While subjective observations indicate less fog and smog here, there are no actual statistics. The open reach of Jamaica Bay lets the New York winter storm winds increase their velocity over Rockaway Beach. The summer offshore breezes are also faster and more frequent, with an average increase of up to 1.2 mph over that of comparable months in New York. Since these figures are from the nearest weather bureau installation, at Kennedy Airport, a station at Rockaway Beach would probably show even greater variations.

The influence on vegetation is marked. Salt spray makes for difficult growing conditions and protection for people as well as planting is necessary.

Analysis

Visual

The site is unique in that it fronts on the water. Residents have views down the beach in both directions. Accessibility to the beach makes the resort quality extremely appealing and unusual so close to the city.

The relative density of the project is low and the appearance of long slab towers at right angles to the beach certainly has certain pleasant implications of Miami Beach and other resort towns.

Great opportunities exist visually for the optimum use of outdoor areas and their connections to the ocean. The shore front road, however, is an unpleasant and unnecessary barrier.

Unfortunately, the ground plane in its landscape design is very loosely handled. There is a great proliferation of fencing and guards which add unpleasant and jarring visual qualities to the landscape. Plantings are not very extensive and because of salt spray not very successful. Many views are interrupted by large parking lots.

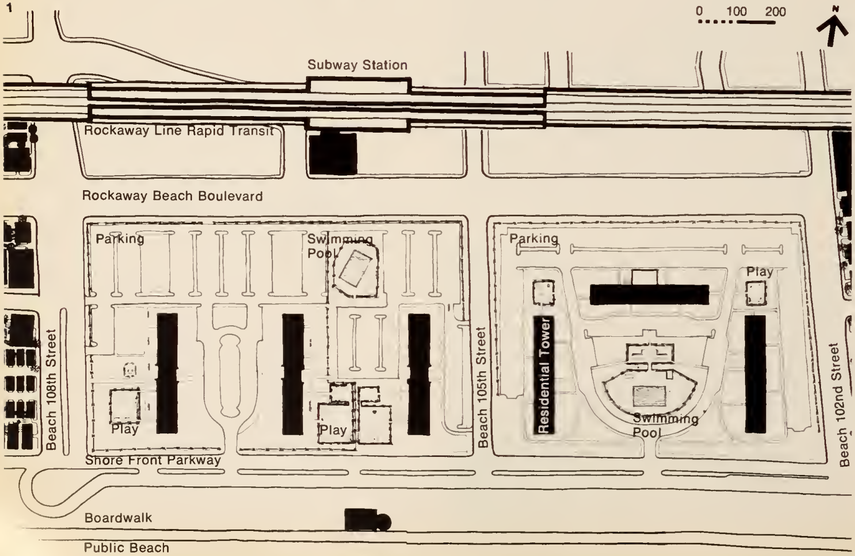
No clear differentiation exists for the open space so that the slab buildings seem to float, unrelated to each other or the landscape. The visual scale of detail is small and not adequate in relationship to the enormity of the outlook. This is the one project which we have had to analyze in a vast, unencumbered space. The problem here is much different than in an urban core, and it has not established its own definition and its own sense of integration with itself.

Proposals

1. Remove the Shore Front Drive and reclaim this land for park use in conjunction with the boardwalk and beach. Use the existing hardcourts as they are and develop the new open space with grass areas for sunning and other beach activities. Portions of the Shore Front Drive at the ends of the crosstown boulevards should be saved as small parking areas for summer use.

2. Increase resort quality by additional facilities. General increase in the recreational facilities outside and inside the buildings. Many of these could be directed to summer use, emphasizing

1

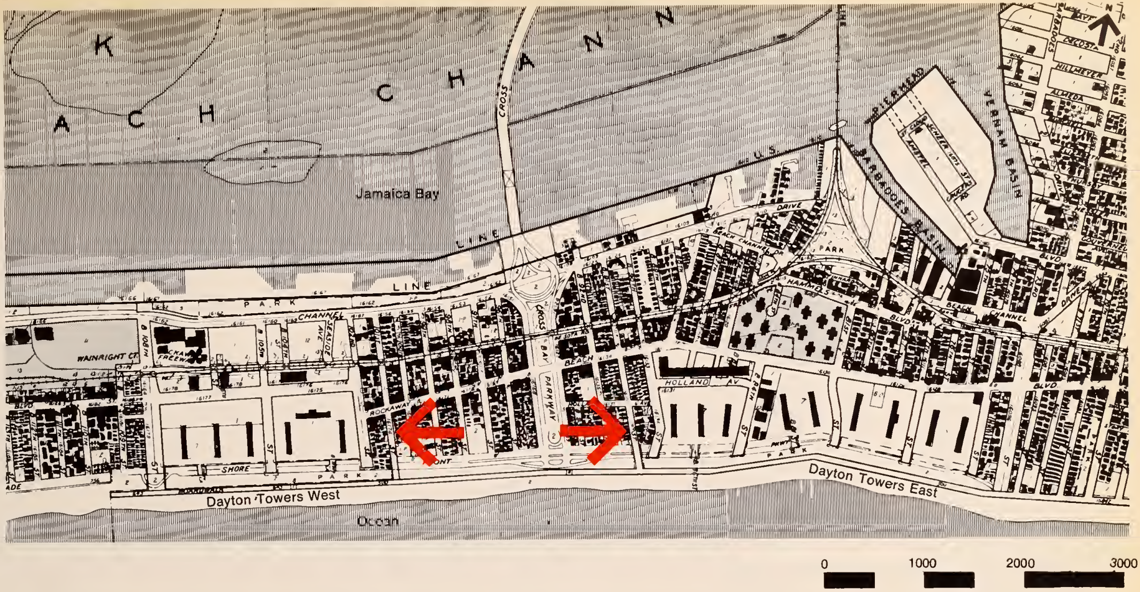


1
Existing Conditions Dayton Towers

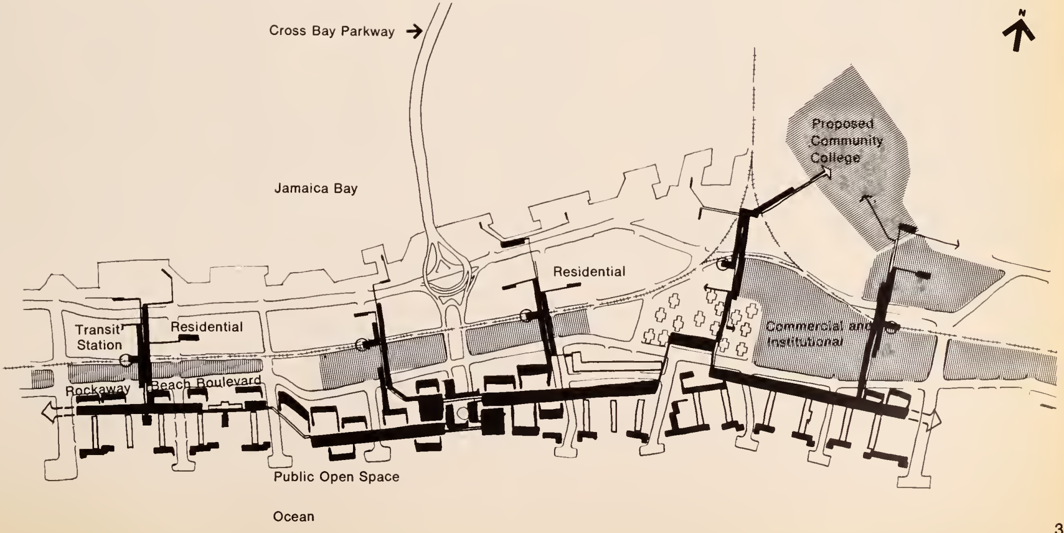
2
Area Map Dayton Towers

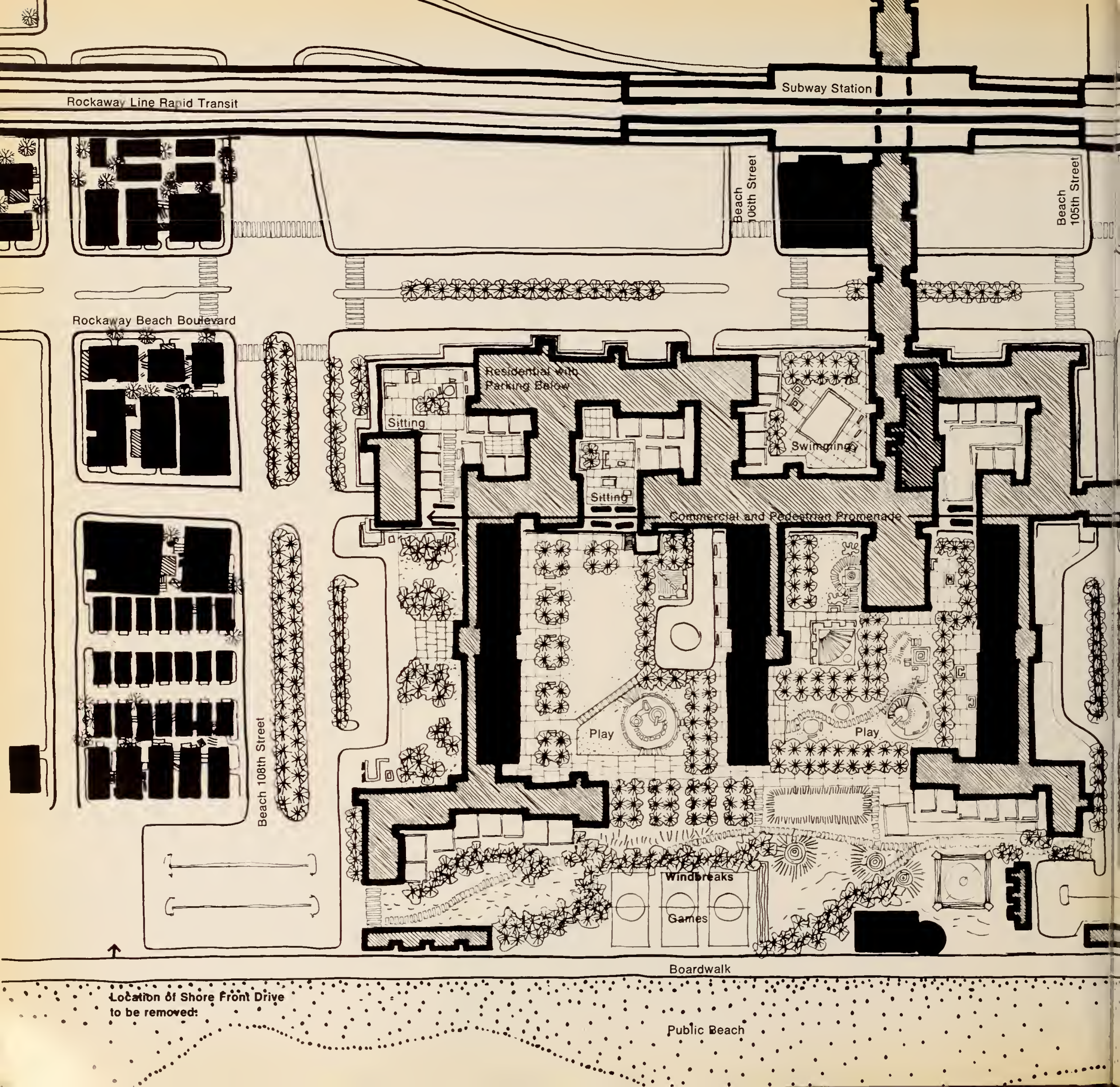
3
Area Proposal

2

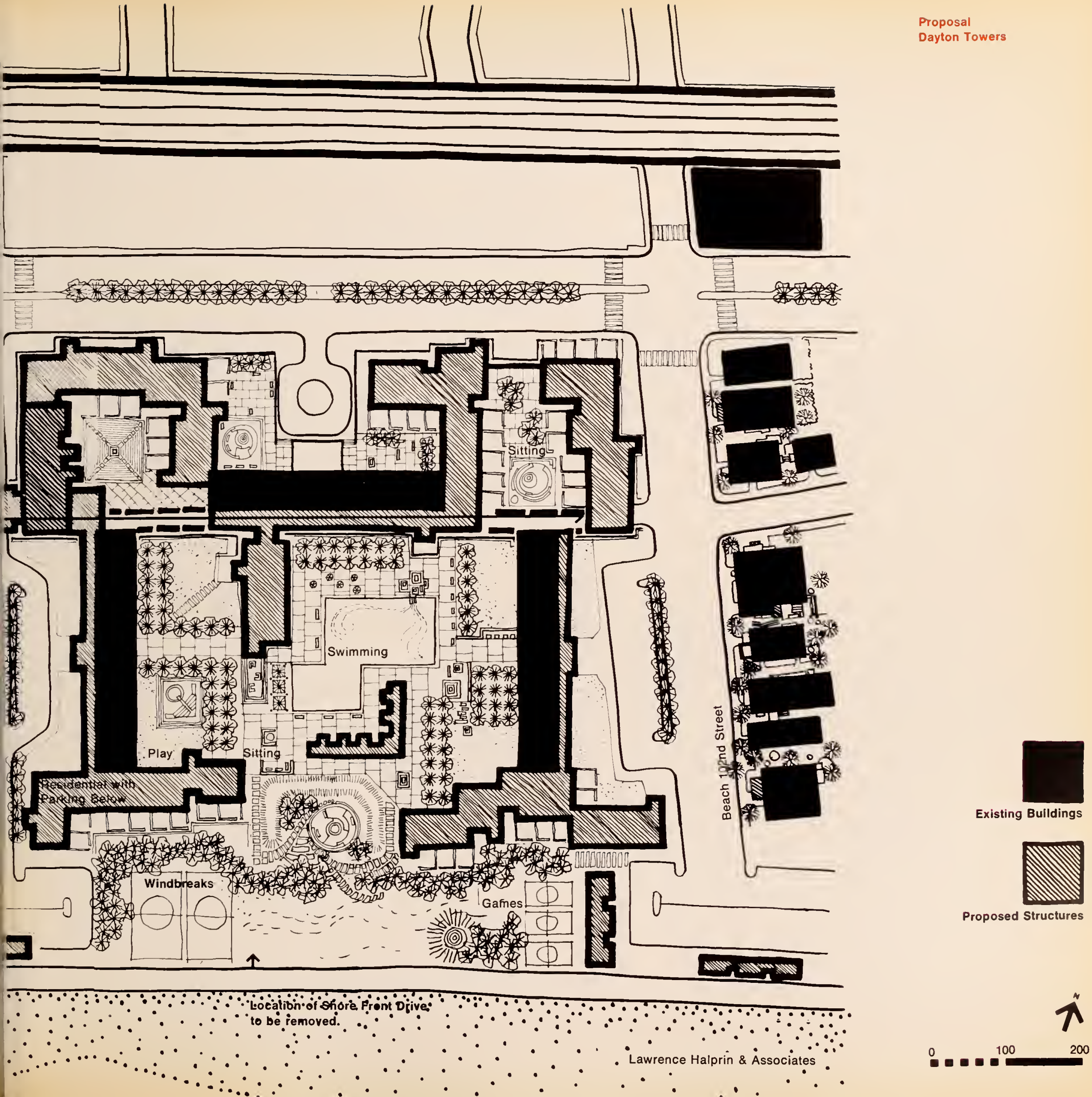

Jamaica Bay
Beach Channel
Cross Bay Parkway
Rockaway Beach Blvd
Holland Av
Shore Front Parkway
Barbadoes Basin
Vernam Basin
Dayton Towers West
Dayton Towers East
Ocean
0
1000
2000
3000
N

3


Cross Bay Parkway
N
Jamaica Bay
Proposed Community College
Residential
Transit Station
Residential
Commercial and Institutional
Rockaway Beach Boulevard
Public Open Space
Ocean


Subway Station
Rockaway Line Rapid Transit
Beach 106th Street
Beach 105th Street
Rockaway Beach Boulevard
Residential with Parking Below
Sitting
Swimming
Sitting
Commercial and Pedestrian Promenade
Beach 108th Street
Play
Play
Windbreaks
Games
Boardwalk
Location of Shore Front Drive to be removed:
Public Beach

Proposal Dayton Towers



Lawrence Halprin & Associates

shops, cabanas, outdoor landscaped courts.

3. Increase the density in the project area itself and promote a denser development over the rest of the spit. Occupation of the available land is nearly complete but poorly used. The density at the moment does not appear to be adequate to support a viable community. The transit line is under-used and because of this, poor service is offered; increased density would stimulate better service for all the residents.

4. Provide a linear structure linking one slab building to the others, incorporating into it the additional shops, stores, services and community facilities which would be needed by the larger population. This linear link would be connected into crosstown links which would intersect subway stations and extend beyond to serve the new housing on the other side of the island.

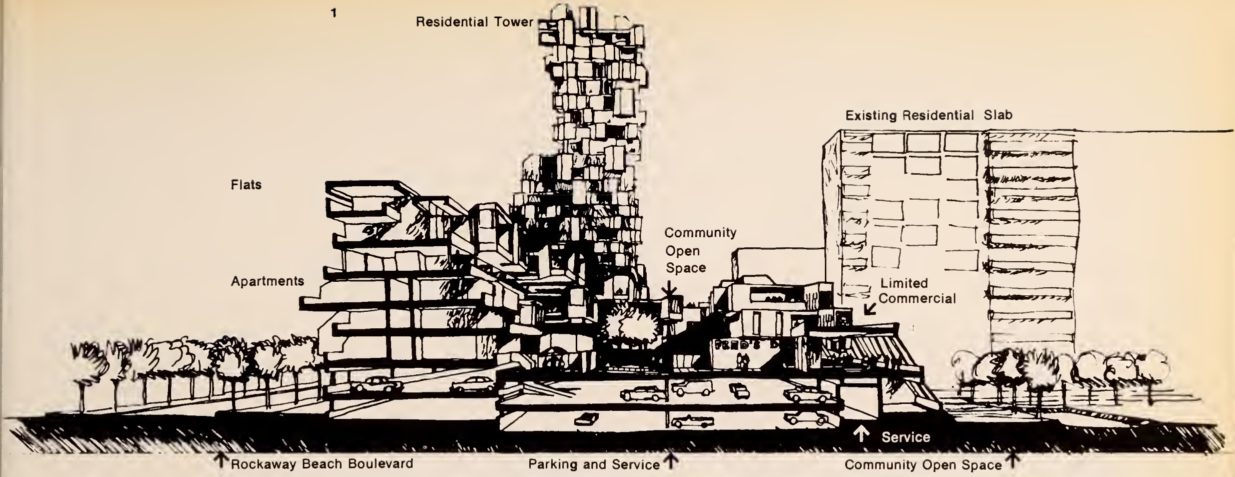
5. Additional housing to be built in at the inland end and the ocean end of the existing slabs. These are placed in positions which strengthen the enclosure of the spaces between the buildings and in relation to one another so that smaller scaled spaces for private use are created. This, with the addition of mounds and walls, will also ameliorate the offshore winds and provide for improved climate within the courts.

6. Parking is located primarily in the enclosed deck park on the inland side. Drive entrances should be relocated where necessary to the cross street side of the slab buildings—freeing the interior areas for recreational use.

The influence of our proposals on the local microclimate and its "liveability" have been analyzed and our conclusions follow:

Protection at ground level from the northwest winds and the summer extremes of insolation are the basic climatic ameliorations proposed here. The main winter winds flow along the long axis of the building masses while the main streets which run parallel to the beach line are oriented along the best lines for winter windbreak. In effect the solidly built blocks from 73rd to 81st act as windbreaks for the northern flank of the east section of Dayton Towers. The western portion is not as well protected; however, the proposed additions will not only provide a continuous windbreak along the northern boundary of both sections, but will also present many sheltered courtyards exposed to the full effect of the cooling sea breezes during the overheated period of the year. In addition, strategically placed clumps of trees will add to shade and further improve the liveability of the enclosed open spaces during the overheated summer period.

1



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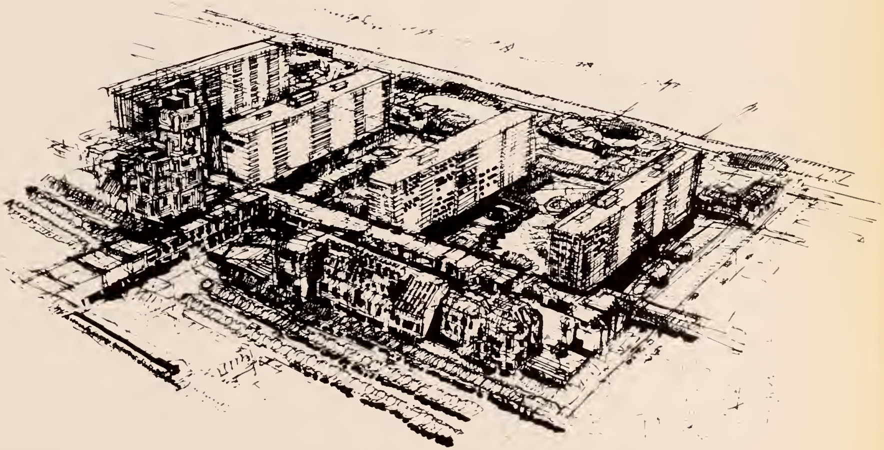
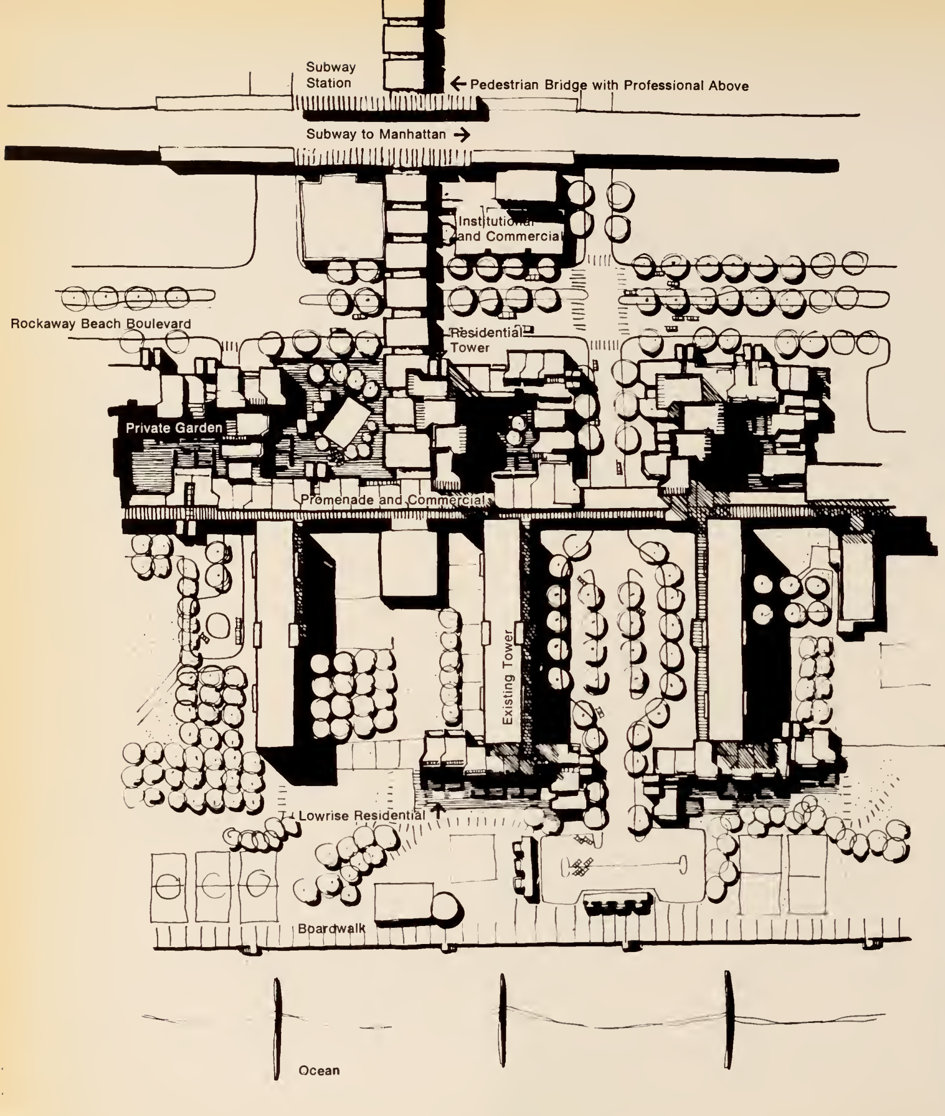


1
Section Through Proposed Multi-Dimensional Structure showing shops and other flexible spaces for comercial and community uses. Two level parking below private gardens and community open space. New towers rise from multi-dimensional system at intervals as required.

2
View towards the Ocean of existing linear slabs, foreground structures are the linkages including housing, shops, plazas, and covered parking. Courtyards between slabs are developed as intensively landscaped courts.



Dayton Towers
Proposed Sketch Plan

The plan indicates how a multi-dimensional structure will enhance and augment the project. Parking is covered by decks on the inboard side. On these, shops and townhouses, open courts and plazas create protected small-scaled promenades which lead down into the new landscaped courtyards between the existing buildings. The beach front is opened up to increased use by removing the redundant access road, and parking is re-established by screened cul-de-sacs. Micro-climate will be improved and the courtyards protected from wind and salt spray.

Part II Factors Affecting Open Spaces

Our conclusions from our review of the six projects assigned us and other projects in New York are that the residents find many things lacking in their environments. We realized that **before** we could analyze these designs and find out what was lacking we needed desperately to discover WHAT PEOPLE REALLY WANTED. This is usually quite different from what they say they want or even consciously think they want. It is often different from what designers think they should have! To discover what people want requires penetration into subconscious or hidden desires and needs which may be at loggerheads with expressed desires. Therefore, one of our predominant areas of investigation has been in the realm of the human and psychological responses to environment.

The overriding principle which has emerged from our researches is the need for people to achieve an inner sense of pride, a quality of self esteem.

This state of mind will not be achieved as a result of the quality of the environment alone; other factors are equally if not more determining. Stability of employment, non-discrimination, prideful relationships to a community structure, stability of family life, all enter in a significant way into the equation.

But we have also discovered how deep rooted the relationship to environment can be in affecting self esteem and therefore happiness. The effect of an environment on people is not only positive, i.e., it does not function **only** in providing facilities and beauty for people to enjoy in a passive way. It also functions significantly in making **demands** on people. These demands establish a quality of stress. When stresses arise which are soluble they can be considered a positive, creative result of the environment. If they are insoluble then people become neurotic, alienated, and they can be considered negative. Insoluble stresses result in unhappiness. Soluble stresses enhance people's lives and generate creativity.

The most significant way to effect stresses which are soluble is to allow people to become involved in the processes of programming and designing their own environments.

Sense of Place

One of the greatest contributing elements to a person's self esteem is a sense of place associated with where he lives: This sense of place is both a biological as well as a psychological imperative. Recent work on animal behavior confirms it; psychologists recognize this sense as one which may be at least as important as the other more commonly aknowledged ones such as sight and smell, etc.

In animals this sense is called "territoriality." It has to do with a staking out of a claim on a piece of territory which the individual calls his own. It is interesting to note that territoriality usually refers only to members of the same species, i.e., bears will allow other animals to occupy their own territory but not other **bears** [Thorpe].

All people have this same sense of territoriality or sense of place. For some reason it has been thought that this does not apply as much to urban dwellers because they live in apartments rather than houses; but the same imperative applies [Hall, Baum, et al].

Urban dwellers have, in fact, a deep-seated need for a close and intimate relation to the place in which they live. Where they live is an echo of themselves. They want to feel that where they are is a specific place with a character, just as they want to feel unique as individuals. They resent anonymity; they wish a personalized character.

Unfortunately, many of the projects we have studied diminish rather than enhance this basic human need. Anonymous buildings, each like its neighbor, rise from anonymous ground spaces. There is a sense of disorientation in these projects; one does not know where one is; everything is the same and one feels like a stranger in a surreal landscape. As a result, one feels insecure, out of touch, depersonalized, dehumanized.

The quality of place is a children's as well as adults' need. In other times, New York children could identify their home by their own stoop or by looking up and seeing their mother wave to them from the window or throw them some money for candy. Now in the newer projects the stoops are gone, the windows are all alike and far away. Techniques for identification of one's home are necessary to replace the simpler identifying elements of older times.

All entrances used to be on the streets—you entered directly; you sensed where you were in relation to the neighborhood. But now entrances are no longer on the street, and they need to be more clearly identified. The entrance has deep psychological implications. Even in its form it is feminine [Baum], signifying mother. Entrances can be demarked, dignified by special designs of canopies, by clear connections to streets, by color, by being lifted by steps from the ground plane. Ramps can be used for baby carriages as is done alongside steps in Sweden.

On the ground the sense of place can be emphasized by special design and by useful facilities near entrances. Telephone booths located near entrances would help as would sitting areas with candy vending machines. Small plazas near doorways would give a sense of identity.

People want to feel that where they live is unique, but they also want some relationships to the larger neighborhood around them. Sometimes these two points have been in conflict.

At Penn Station South many of the people who were questioned rejected the neighborhood, possibly because it is different from them ethnically and culturally. And yet a common complaint was that they wished the neighborhood could be more "interesting" and safe, so that they could enjoy its life and color. It seldom occurred to anyone that by isolating themselves from their neighborhood they were, in fact, furthering their own sense of alienation and paranoia [Baum]. As a result of this quality of depersonalization and isolation, people become alienated from their environment and from each other. It has been suggested that people make real attempts to relate to their community, to get dialogues going in the neighborhood, to invite outsiders in, to avoid isolation.

The sense of place has two faces. It is house-oriented **and** neighborhood-oriented. People want to **feel** part of their neighborhood. In other times neighborhoods and places grew up in New York focused around a useful community faciilty—a library or church or synagogue or school or public pool or a settlement house. It has often been a neighborhood park. There was a feeling of community almost like a small town. New York had many neighborhoods.

Our new places should once again establish the sense of a place related to the home, but also to a meaningful community focus which brings people together and locates them and gives them a sense of pride and self esteem. Few recent housing projects that we have studied provide this kind of focus, this kind of neighborhood facility.

"A sense of disorientation, one does not know where one is, one feels like a stranger in a surreal landscape"

The sense of place arises from a quality of design in the environment, certainly. Usually designers speak of "place" as an architecturally designed building complex. But from our investigations we have found that the sense of place has to do with neighbors and the relationships of people with common neighborhood goals expressed and acted upon. It has to do with community, and mutual support and help. Design can facilitate this but it alone cannot achieve it.

Involvement and Participation

The concept of involvement and participation underlies this whole report. It seems central to the comments of all our consultants. Rand has summarized the point when he says, "Designed environments which are thought out, formalized, and complete are usually 'lifeless' and unapproachable because (a) they do not invite interaction and modification to suit immediate human needs; (b) they are unable to grow, develop and become extended through human use. Human habitation merely fulfills (for better or for worse) the designer's conception of their potential meaning rather than leading to the discovery of new functions and new forms of interaction. Oddly enough [he goes on to say] many environments which 'work' well for people meet few, if any, aesthetic criteria ordinarily employed by designers."

This is a bitter pill to swallow, for most designers.

Yet it echoes strongly the breakthrough being made in many of the other arts. Artists in other fields as well, are beginning to discover that the set theater piece, the preconceived form, the completely choreographed dance, alienates newer audiences and isolates performers from viewers. Artists in other fields are searching for ways to involve their audiences, to allow them to participate in the very act of making art. The two are parallel. We have much to learn from them.

What we do know is that a feeling of real **involvement** with the environment is essential for the process of self-actualization [Rand]. This is not now possible for most New Yorkers; but it can be achieved if it can be made part of the housing process. If the environment were not completely defined, if it were not predetermined, if it were not completely controlled, if it were not completely fixed, then New Yorkers could participate in it more fully. If you simply occupy a place and cannot add to it you feel rootless!

When people cannot participate with their environment they feel temporary in it [Baum]. They do not feel committed or responsible for it. As a by-product of non-responsibility, vandalism increases, sheer neglect and abuse of the environment will result. If people do not like their environment or feel responsible for it they will also tend to destroy it.

One way of giving people a sense of involvement in their environment is through actual physical participation in it. Proper areas for children to play are an obvious need. What is not so widely recognized are the needs of active teenagers who are so full of energy and need to have places and things which they too can use and work with. Projects should have areas attractive to teenagers —dance halls, places to play drums, etc.

Even adults must somehow be able to participate with their environment. Some of the most succesful plazas we have designed were successful less for their beauty than for the active potential for the neighborhood in their use. Adults should have craft areas, do-it-yourself centers where they can make a bookshelf or fix a TV set.

Other possibilities for participation are store spaces which are flexibly designed so that people can modify them, both in design and use; at times even change their original uses to small theaters or store front churches.

There can be small allotment gardens, which are very popular in Europe, where people can grow their own flowers and vegetables. Moveable features should be encouraged—outdoor areas which residents can themselves change and work on at their leisure. Gardening can be done by residents.

But the really significant kind of involvement is that which enables you to enunciate your own needs and make your participation in the development of the place where you are going to live.

One of the major recommendations of this report is that people want to be part of the process of planning and executing the housing and the open spaces, the homes and the neighborhoods in which they are going to spend their lives. This can be done through community groups and through lengthy and frank dialogue with administrators and designers for the projects before and during design. This is where involvement really counts. It is difficult and demanding but it can be done, and it is well worth the effort!

If people help in the process of planning and executing their living places they will feel responsible for them and identify with them. They will initiate dialogues; community groups will automatically spring up; a sense of neighborhood will result; open space will function or be modified if it is not appropriate; vandalism will diminish.

Jane Jacobs has said that what is prideful and meaningful to people in New York is what they have accomplished—not necessarily what they have built. It is important to look at a park preserved from a highway and say. "I helped to do that."

Flexibility

There is, we believe, great need for flexibility as one of the primary requisites for the environment. Any system which is too firmly fixed has enormous limitations. It will limit growth, it will limit change, it will limit involvement. It implies that we can decide now what people will want or how they will live 10, 20 or 100 years from now.

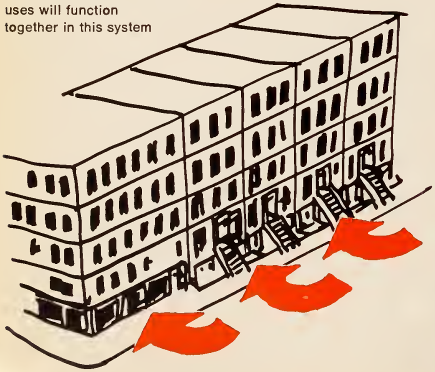
The old street system, with its small units of housing, allowed for a considerable amount of flexibility. This is evident in West Side Renewal, Bellevue South, and other areas where change can occur within one unit or even a group of units without the need to eradicate the whole system. Residential and commercial uses have been able to exist and function cheek-by-jowl at various times. Because of the strong face-to-face relation of buildings to street, the old system accommodated varied uses and permitted nondisruptive adaptations.

Any new system should admit of similar kinds of change. We have proposed a multi-dimensional system whose basis is adaptation to flexibility. It must of course be refined, and studied. Other systems will undoubtedly be suggested. But whatever they are they must include flexibility as an intrinsic element in their design, including the flexibility of incorporating older rehabilitated structures into the complex, and changes of use patterns and commercial uses.

The needs for flexibility include (but are not limited to) open space. Open spaces must admit for flexibility because use patterns may change, but they also should allow for the flexibility inherent in people's own desires to modify their environment, which we have spoken of before. When open spaces are too fixed both in design and construction then, again, residents will tend to relate to them at arm's length. Flexibility includes the need for participation and involvement in open spaces.

1

Residential and commercial uses will function together in this system



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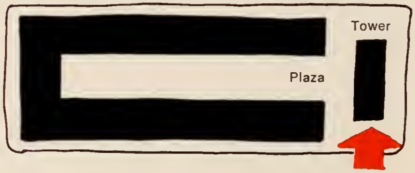

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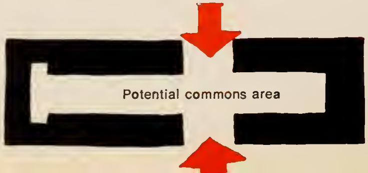


1
Because there is a strong horizontal and vertical order as well as frequent connections to the street, this old system will accommodate varied use and accommodate non-disruptive adaptation.

2
The typical tower-plaza arrangement establishes access to interiors at a redundant point. Unless it is combined with a plaza or common meeting place for the entire block it is an isolating rather than enhancing element.

3
The long, uninterrupted rows of brownstones create excessively long blocks—600′ typically. A breakthrough at mid-block creates possibilities for vest pocket parks and opens up access to interior commons. Breakthroughs also create venturi action and will improve summer (and winter) climate.

Change

The process of change is one of the most pressing questions in renewing the city. Many factors are at work. One of the most difficult ones is that of relocation. It is well enough to say that people can move to another place and then return when the new quarters are built. How is this accomplished—particularly if rentals are different than they originally were? What happens to communities?

Over and over planners and designers become confused by the apparent rejection by people of what planners consider an improvement to their environment. Slum clearance, cleaning up of neighborhoods, tearing down of outmoded buildings, are resisted. Freeways are resisted. Newness is rejected. There are many reasons for this, of course, not the least of which is that when in the past neighborhoods have been "improved" it does not in any way help the residents because they have in the process been "relocated" somewhere else. Often people are worried about trading something they know for something untried which they are not convinced is better.

Rand points out the significance of the "shock of change." Mark Frieds' work, "Grieving for a Lost Home," provides exhaustive data on the destruction of a viable community. Presumably in this age of fragmentation, many experts will agree that viable communities are few and far between. The destruction of any functioning community and the unfortunate consequences, e.g., reactive-depression suffered by former residents, are a pitiful reminder of our naivete in these matters and our oblivion when it comes to fulfilling simple human needs and the ruthlessness we practice with other people's lives.

But we cannot hang on to the old just because it is there. Much of our old housing is in bad repair and it would be falling prey to a soft-headed romanticism to imply that ***all*** of New York should be preserved. For one thing, it is often too costly to renovate many buildings which have become derelict. To quote Von Eckardt, "We should never exclude but we cannot entirely rely on restoration. . . . Old Georgetown, even Greenwich Village were built for other times, needs, and sentiments. The old is not automatically artful or even congenial." Ratensky comments, "Some old housing, particularly the Old Law Tenement, even when totally gutted and redesigned, does not produce dwellings with desirable conditions of ventilation and sunlight. Further, experience to date indicates that extensive rehabilitation, even with all available aids, significantly changes the rent structure and requires at least temporary relocation." Eisner says on this point, "Let's face it. It is impossible to rehabilitate brownstones for low rent public housing or even for moderate income housing as cheaply as we can build new housing. **This is what people seem to want** and, since it is cheaper let's stop this foolishness with rehabilitation."

This may, of course, be the operative sentence. Is it what people want? Sometimes, sometimes not. We must involve the people in this decision. And the decision, when it is made, may require establishing the good qualities of the old **in the new,** i.e., the small scale and the sense of a continuing community.

In our view, wherever possible, functioning viable communities should be maintained and new construction knitted into the fabric of the existing community. For this reason the approach at West Side Renewal seems to us admirable. It is reflected in the people and community groups occupying the area.

On the other hand, resistance to change is offset by a desire for new things.

This is again a biologic and psychologic need. Psychologists point out that any person who does not grow (change) is sick, and the same is true for all organisms. Change and growth are essential to life.

We have to reckon with the fact that one-fifth of our population or forty million people change residence every year. But they wish to make this decision themselves—generate their own programs. What seems most required is to encourage people's own "visibility," i.e., disclose what the problem is and how they relate to it (in psychological terms show them "where they are") and then make possible their own involvement and sense of responsibility for the change [Baum]. This applies equally to people who are forced to change by external forces.

This has been put differently by Jacobs who points out that the quality of self-involvement possible for urban dwellers is in neighborhood pressure groups which replace, for them, the do-it-yourself feeling of suburbanites.

The conflict of change in itself is not bad for people [Rand]. "All human behavior and consequently all effectively functioning human environments are rooted in dialectic or conflict. Probably the most general way of pointing to this dialectic process is to say that all 'systems' strive to develop by differentiating as completely as possible while maintaining maximum integrity or hierarchic organization. This polarized balance of forces—differentiation and dispersion **vs.** integration and centralization—is, among other factors, what renders to a plan, a room, or an area of the city the quality of a living, dynamic system." [Rand]

Stability and change are two polarities expressing two aspects of people's needs and both need expression. Of the two, change requires the most participation and is the most damaging in its consequences. When it can really involve the people who are affected by change as participants in decisions it can become creative and acceptable.

Seen this way, planning can really understand its role as that of helping people live with and involve themselves in change. Our society is more mobile and dynamic than it used to be and the planning process, if it is to be a life-oriented one, will have no beginning and no end—a continuum of constant renewal.

The principal business of our goodly city [New York] seems to be to unmake what has cost years of labour and heaps of money in the erection. Never was the organ of destructiveness more prominently developed among any people than among the New Yorkers. No sooner has a splendid pile of buildings been erected, and the occupant become comfortably settled, than a new whim arises, the work of demolition commences and another "castle in the air" is made to take its place, but fated, like the former, to be prostrated by the first whirlwind of speculations which are always bursting, like the winds from the caves of Aeolus, over the devoted city . . . the hand of destruction, under the semblance of improvement, has laid a large number of buildings in ruins. They had cost immense sums and were built of costly materials, but had stood so long (perhaps five whole years) that they had become antiquated and disagreeable to the modern taste of the new race who had come upon the stage within a year or two past."

The New York Mirror, July 13 [1839]

Crowding

Overcrowding has always been a problem in New York, particularly in Manhattan, and will continue to become increasingly serious in the other boroughs. Much of the new type housing is an over-reaction to the incredibly bad housing at the turn of the century. At that time the Lower East Side had the highest density in the world—over 1000 residents per acre.

Hall has pointed out that human conditions in urban situations can be compared to the "behavior sink" which developed under experimental conditions in animal colonies. Behavioral patterns were profoundly changed by overcrowding and individuals became neurotic and cannibalistic. Many other normal community controls vanished. Reaction to these pressures caused births to fall off and the population to diminish through fighting and decreased sexual activity to a level where the population density was again normal.

Though insufficient work has been done on what **are** acceptable densities—a fact which should underlie our whole approach to urban housing—there is considerable evidence to indicate that this factor cannot be isolated from others. Density is only one of many factors and this report contains a factual analysis of the history of density in New York with some of our conclusions (see Density).

The aversity to crowding has been in large measure due to the unpleasant side effects—the unhealthy, even savage and repugnant results associated with slum densities in the past. But high density in and of itself is not wrong.

In the early part of this century, as before then, conditions in tenement districts were appalling. Filth was rampant, sanitary conditions were primitive if at all existent, light and air were absent. Wherever this condition exists today these negative and evil qualities should be overcome at once. In New York, I am told, very few Old Law tenements have hall toilets left.

We make no plea for crowding which results in unhealthy (physically or emotionally) conditions. Biological minima of light and air and sanitation and adequate space **must** be met.

But light and air and space per se do not make people pleased with their environment. Our own investigations on the issue of satisfaction with where you live, limited though they may be, indicate that New Yorkers tend to be much more in tune with the qualities of their lives including their environment than are most suburban dwellers who are far less crowded.

Baum points out that crowding results in certain pleasant social results and that it is only if it is unaccompanied by positive side effects that it is unpleasant. In fact, the more **un**pleasant factors in urban living are isolation and loneliness. The presumed reason for the design of single high towers surrounded by vast undifferentiated open space is to achieve a feeling of less crowding, and yet this seems to have been significantly responsible for the feeling of loneliness and alienation in New York City.

Crowding as a function of large groups of people interacting and living close to each other is one of the pleasant and desired qualities of living in New York.

Privacy

The opposite end of the pole from the sense of crowding is considered to be privacy. Yet the polarity between the two is one usually of tension rather than of complete opposites. It is by contrast that the two conditions exist, not in and of themselves. Urban dwellers need both and yet they fear both.

The real meaning of privacy is the opportunity for isolation **when you want it,** a place to pursue your own interests, your own scene. It does **not** mean that people want to be apart from each other. Rand has commented on this important point as follows: Tension between **interaction** and **privacy** is clear. Take, for example, "Chock-Full-of-Nuts." Because of the physical arrangement of seating there are few "face" encounters between strangers, and yet there is a great deal of propinquity. To the extent that it functions well, a setting can placate fear of solitude and aloneness, while at the same time insuring individuality, isolation and sanctuary. Subways provide as much or more propinquity while failing to assure a balance amount of privacy. "Face" encounters in the subway crush are too frequent, too intimate, and therefore discomforting. They lead to the use of a variety of internal mechanisms for dealing with the anxiety they create, e.g., auto-involvement, looking at shoes, hands, advertisements, and tuning out.

To be sure, designers can create structures which provide a feeling of sanctuary, privacy, or aloneness. Alternatively, they can funnel people through restricted spaces and force physical interaction. It is no accident, however, that most moments of isolation and of contact between people occur serendipitously, and in spaces or areas not designed for this purpose (corridors, streets, halls, stairs, thresholds, exits). Environments created to fulfill a specific human need often fail through their insensitivity to the character of ordinary human experience. Namely, that people wish for, and at the same time fear encounters; desire, but are afraid of closeness; seek out, but are made uncomfortable by isolation. In fact, although there are a wide variety of personal living styles, this is probably a central factor in the gravitation toward cities. Cities provide a balance between **work** and **play, solitude** and **company, smallness** and **bigness, activity** and **repose, tension** and **relaxation, focus onself** and **focus on world, nature** and **artifice,** etc., when and where they function as support rather than a source of disquiet.

Privacy is not only a visual factor, it can also refer to noise. One of the most common complaints in New York is the noise of trucking as it is at Penn Station South. In general, the high level of noise in New York is psychologically disturbing. It acts as a stress on the nervous system. The response to subtleties of sound diminishes as the tolerance level goes up—meaning that we have less response to minor shades of sound and we respond only when the intensity level is high enough. Subway screeching causes nothing but irritation.

Urban forms in the environment should be designed in such a way as to reduce noise levels as much as possible. Interior courtyards and interior block spaces and well baffled parks are ways of achieving this.

Planting is not actually an effective sound reduction material. The apparent psychological reduction of noise by plantings is worth considering in their use, however. Also distance of setbacks, such as 15-25 feet, offers only minor reductions of sound at highrise levels. This will become more and more significant as air rights developments over freeways proliferate. It is a significantly observable factor in several projects of this type that we have studied.

Privacy is not only an individual requirement but one of age group as well [Baum]. Every area

Teenagers need to have group privacy for themselves and will somehow find places of their own.

must provide places for teenagers to pursue their own interests by themselves without the supervision of the adult world.

People's real needs are often in conflict with management needs which hope always to maintain some control of activities. Privacy, however, means being able to carry on group activity by yourself without the help or surveillance of management. Hall has referred to the fact that producing stupid people is too high a price to pay for manageability.

There is an ethnic variation in regard to privacy that should be considered in environmental design. People from different backgrounds react differently to questions of privacy and require spaces of different types to satisfy these needs.

Hall has written of this problem at length, pointing out through many examples the relationship of space conceptions to privacy, as well as the related factors of touch, smell, noise tolerance, etc. The point is that we believe ethnic qualities and needs should form a strong basis for design of individual projects and their open spaces.

Urban Scale
Relationship to Ethnic and Age Group Variation

The interrelation of crowding and privacy is not limited to physical contact. Space relationships have ethnic and cultural significances as well. People from different cultural backgrounds have different conceptions of space and it has different meanings to them. Japanese people, for example, relate space to social organization—the series of concentric zones around the capitol reflect the social structure. In contrast, European space hierarchies are linear and culminate in the palace. The importance of these ethnic characteristics in a city like New York with such cultural variety should be recognized and emphasized. It has been responsible for much of the flavor of character of the city and if continued, as it should be, it will add to its diversity and interest.

Hall points out that the relation of spaces to people, the social distances between people, the sense of crowding, depend a great deal on ethnic background. In the Middle East there is no private sphere in public spaces—pushing and touching is a means of communication; crowding is synonymous with involvement, not with stress; privacy is gained by stopping to speak. The same is true in many European countries.

The sense of sound, smell, and touch, as well as the visual sense, affect the quality of crowding or isolation. No matter what the extent and size of a space, high levels of noise will diminish its apparent size. Strong smells affect the scale of a space.

The consideration of ethnic needs should be reflected in New York designs for housing. The rural populations coming to New York will inevitably react differently to spaces and crowding than the previously urbanized ones—this will affect southern, previously rural, Negroes as it will affect rural Puerto Ricans.

The maintenance of ethnic characteristics survives even supposed improvement in status. Often people prefer to continue the qualities of their older living patterns in their new homes. The flavor may be important to them and the sense of continuity with the past and old customs often has deep meanings.

The major ethnic groups of American cities maintain their distinct identities for several generations [Hall]. The Italian villagers of Herbert Gans' "The Urban Villagers" needed smaller scaled spaces, required less home space, apparently less light, and wanted tightly concentrated people groupings.

The design for ethnic characteristics should affect open space. People from Anglo-Saxon backgrounds seem to lack incentive towards the development of commons areas while Europeans react more favorably to these. In areas where Spanish-speaking people will be living there is need for spaces for street fairs and other community festivals. This relation of ethnic groups to their neighborhood has been disastrously over-ridden in many cities such as Boston's West End and in New York's Lower East Side.

Though this idea of ethnic individuality may be in conflict with the "American" concept of integration of cultural and economic groups [Eisner], we recommend it, if only for its allowance of choice—that most important of freedoms. The validity of the melting pot where every group gave up its characteristics in favor of a single uniformity is becoming more questionable.

New York and New Yorkers do not wish to be poured into the sterile mould of uniformity. Why should they? It is only if you are **forced** to stay in a ghetto that you resent it.

The matter of **urban scale** involves much more than its usual architectonic implications. Scale is not just a matter of size of buildings or simply their bulk relationships to each other and the open spaces around them. Scale becomes both sensory and psychological. It is, as we have pointed out, affected by cultural background. It is also affected by geographic background. Rural people react differently to urban scale than continuously urbanized ones.

Parr maintains that the typical development is wrongly scaled to provide stimulation for children. The result is environmental deprivation—a very small child experiences only what is immediately within his mother's reach—a wholly home environment. The 3-5 year old relates to heights which are low and largely tactile in nature—expressed as carpet textures, floor patterns, wall textures; shiny objects within reach. At this level most housing developments are vast deserts with little to relate to but asphalt, fallen leaves and dog excrement. The purpose of texture and pattern is not only as visual enrichment for adults but also as a response to younger people's needs for physical stimulation. The environment should be designed for the stimulation of various age levels. The importance of pavings and textures, low walls to climb on, various levels and steps, is a matter of psychological, not merely visual enrichment.

The New York sky is of course the outer limit of the open space network. More importantly it affects scale and psychological response. Not enough work has been done on this subject, though the responses of claustrophobia in subways and panic in tunnels are well documented.

The shape of the sky is part of New York's buildings and open spaces. Part of the function of open space is to relieve the sense of constant enclosure—the influence of the shape and scale of sky needs further investigation.

Barriers

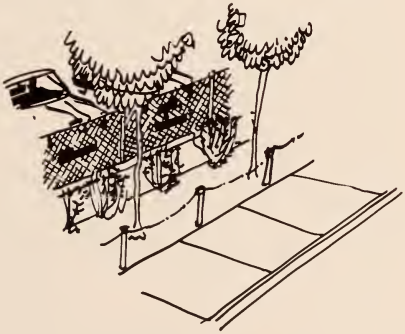
The qualities of urban scale and space are controlled by their enclosing elements—the **barriers,** walls, screens, and curbings which limit their access and use.

In the New York environment most barriers are negative ones, they exclude. Such is the fenced-in open space at Penn Station South which excludes neighborhood people from its use. At Tompkins Square a fence separates the play area in Haven Plaza from the balance of the development. Such psychologically unpleasant barriers should never be installed, especially when they are transparent, allowing glimpses of the promised land, but no access.

Parr has listed three types of barriers: prohibitive, persuasive, suggestive. He points out that, "permeable and prohibitive barriers such as tall chain link fences are generally extremely offensive, particularly in residential neighborhoods. Such barriers do not merely ask that you desist from entry but rudely order and compel you to stay out at the same time as they blatantly advertise the space and amenities they deny you. These are also unsatisfactory to those inside since they expose the user to unfriendliness engendered by them of the people outside."

Persuasive barriers are not psychologically insulting. They suggest rather than enforce privacy; they imply variation in use or physical separation between conflicting uses. Among these which have been used extensively in Europe and which we would recommend for New York City are bollards, balusters, low fences or walls, railings, banisters, etc. These may say, for example, "Come in, but only on your feet," or even "come in as a visitor—I live here—do not impose on my privacy."

1



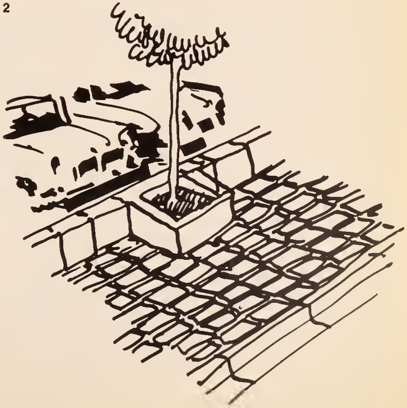
The most pleasant barriers are the suggestive or implied ones such as the low archways into interior courts, strong illumination with darkness behind which discourages penetration, open spaces beyond constricted spaces. It is important to differentiate clearly among the functional requirements of barriers. Often they should not be used at all. When their function is established and the hierarchy of division clear then design can be made.

Complete privacy, when desirable, should be accomplished by above eye-height, solid (not permeable) walls or fences.

Cyclone fences are inappropriate in New York. Both psychologically **and** visually they are non-urban in their visual appearance. They should never be used. Where transparent screens are needed, a new vernacular needs to appear. Our country is rich in its heritage of railings and iron fences, pierced brick walls are a colonial design, the newer square meshes have been used to great advantage.

When barriers are designed so that they can be used for other purposes as well, then they release creative positive reactions rather than negative ones. Walls can, for example, be used for handball, bollards can be seats. Barriers can then become opportunities, not limitations.

2



1
This is the usual configuration of barriers—5 layers to make one simple statement.

2
Combined group of well designed elements to suggest separation.

Neighborhood

The neighborhood extends the feeling of house and home outward into the world of the city. People have a very strong relation and a sense of identification to their neighborhoods. It is within the neighborhood that they are able to maintain their sense of individuality and their sense of continuity. The neighborhood gives qualities of security, of human scale, of mutual help and assistance. It is within the neighborhood that you know the druggist, the grocery man, the cop on the beat. The neighborhood is an urban village [Gans].

Many people find their whole lives focused on and around neighborhoods to the extent that they hardly move out of them. The disruption of life patterns is incredible when a neighborhood is destroyed. Jane Jacobs has commented at length on this point. From the point of view of this report suffice it to say that the neighborhood as a functioning organism is a vital part of New Yorkers' lives and it should be kept and reinforced not demeaned and destroyed.

The attempt should be made in every renewal project to keep, to strengthen, to enlarge each neighborhood and to make the new be inclusive rather than exclusive.

Baum and others constantly reiterate that the only real source of universal parameters for design lies within the family structure. Whenever you optimize a system in which human interactions occur, the model becomes like a well-functioning family! This gives us a clue as to the character of a neighborhood. The qualities of a neighborhood should reflect an extension of the family.

This is quite different from saying that we design for families. It **is** to say that groups of any kind living together in neighborhoods have many of the same requirements in their interrelations as families do. What are the universal requirements of living? Birth, love, security, education, play, values, cultural background, imitation by children of adults through observance of behavioral patterns, learning processes involving reaction to outside stimuli and stress, friendship patterns, relationships to the outside world. These describe the necessary functions of the neighborhood **and** the family. It is on these basic patterns that designs for neighborhoods can be founded.

The neighborhood is an **extension** of the family—many solutions to life problems occur outside the family and the place that children can and **do** watch them being solved is within the neighborhood. In those neighborhoods which have been sterilized and dehumanized, children as well as adults are cheated out of the enrichment of learning processes which they so desperately need.

Baum has pointed out that much resentment occurs when the **actual** neighborhood, in fact, violates the psychological neighborhood. The Amsterdam Houses development abuts Lincoln Center on the east side. But, whether by design or chance, Lincoln Center presents a complete barrier to its neighborhood at this point. The affront is much worse, of course, than if this great cultural institution were not there at all. Brophy's comments reiterate this attitude. I am told on this point, that the Renewal Agency is in the process of making a big push to continue the main plaza level of Lincoln Center across Amsterdam Avenue. For pedestrians, this would connect the Center with the urban renewal project which is an extension of Amsterdam Houses and improve the overall situation.

We find it very difficult to formulate any rules for the desirable size of neighborhoods. The usual criterion is within a child's walking distance i.e., focused around a neighborhood school, a radius of about ¼ mile. But so many other factors are operating as to make physical size only one factor. Size has to do with groups of people, a special community facility, a single ethnic group, a special kind of barrier, the image of its own residences. Flatbush is a neighborhood with a special character more linked by the origins of its residents than by its geographical boundaries.

Where is Flatbush?

On the west it is bounded by Ocean Parkway, where young mothers push baby carriages past new high-rise, high-rent apartments. To the east, Nostrand Avenue divides Flatbush's neatly kept frame houses from Brownsville and East Flatbush. In the south, Kings Highway divides Flatbush from Ocean-front housing projects, parks and airports.

The northern boundary is in dispute.

A line across the sidewalk in the Brooklin Botanic garden marks the 300-year-old boundary between the original Dutch villages of Breùkelen and Vlacte-bos (The Wooded Plain). The boundary runs roughly along Eastern Parkway, where Hasidic Jews sun themselves in the afternoon.

A Kosher butcher says Flatbush begins three blocks south of the park at Church Avenue. A professor says Flatbush starts two miles south at Brooklyn College.

Flatbush was the Dodgers and screams of "Throw the bums out!" from fanatical fans in the Ebbets Field bleachers. It was ill-tasting drinking water from Newkirk Avenue's wells. It was saying "toid" instead of "third"—the famous Flatbush accent. It was moonlight strolls through Prospect Park's Vale of Kashmir and feeding the golden carp in the Patio Theater's mother-of-pearl fish pool on Flatbush Avenue.

"Once it was a big achievement to live in Flatbush," says Shirley Gerber, a stocky blond widow who has lived near Flatbush Avenue for 25 years. "For a Jew coming to Flatbush was a big step up in life."

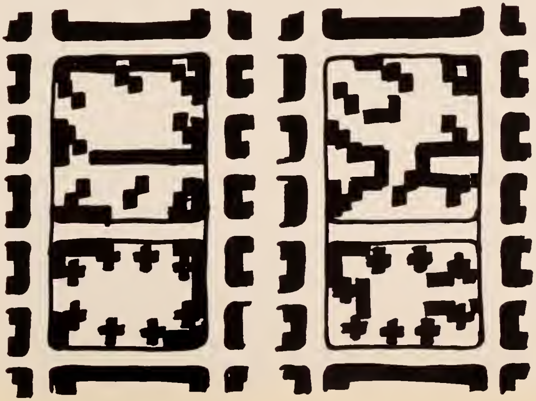
The New York Times,
Wednesday, February 14, 1968

Neighborhoods are organisms—they need a heart and its extensions. The size may vary, it is the quality of scale and visibility and focus, and, most importantly, of entity that counts.

Psychological distance can be as effective as actual distance. Washing machines in the basement are not used as often as those on the same floor, and vandalized more. Playgrounds several blocks away are not used with the same intensity as those close at hand. Avenues such as Ocean or Atlantic, because they are traffic arterials, are more of a barrier than streets. Things should not be too far away—to be part of a neighborhood they should be readily perceived, readily accessible.

One of the most universal complaints we have experienced in our analysis is the non-integration of projects with their surrounding neighborhoods. Penn Station South is an example of such an in-turning project whose very character is so different from its neighbors that it has become an island of isolation both internally and externally. This has had a profound influence on the inhabitants as well as the neighbors. Neither likes the isolation. Baum, from interviews, discovered that the people problem parallels the architectural problem—there is a real feeling of alienation and isolation in both.

1



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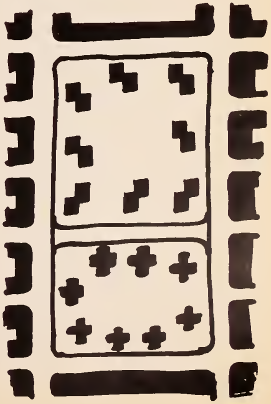


1
Techniques for knitting areas back into the "grain" of the city as we have proposed at West Side Renewal. Some of this is already happening as at Stuyvesant Town along the Avenues.

2
Typical tower development showing lack of relationship to city "grain."

St. Francis Square, Western Addition Redevelopment Area—San Francisco, a cooperative lower and middle income housing development sponsored by the ILWU. Community quality was established from the outset.

Brophy says that one of the major reasons why housing projects fail to be a contribution to their neighborhoods is site planning. The unobstructed area is internalized and it is questionable to the people around the project whether they are permitted inside or not. In our view the most successful projects we have seen are those in which strong attempts have been made by the designers to integrate their designs into the neighborhood. West Side Renewal deserves commendation on this point. It is reinforced by the emergence of strong community groups willing and anxious to participate in decisions and implement them.

Establishing A Community

We have been concerned about how long it takes to establish a sense of community within a new project. This is enormously important because it is not until this quality has been achieved that people begin to feel part of where they live.

Design can help in establishing the sense of a community—it can make the difference between its being possible or impossible to achieve. But in and by themselves buildings do not make a community; it is the people and their interrelations that do.

Hall has commented on this significant point as follows: "This is a matter of the degree to which the people have internalized the community patterns. Mobile middle class people can make a community within a generation. People without know-how and experience in this sort of thing require longer, three or four generations." It is for this reason that established communities are so important to preserve.

It is possible to achieve a sense of community in a much shorter period of time. That is a matter of involvement and at what stage in the process this occurs. If the people who are going to live in an area are involved at its inception; if they can interact with both the designers **and** the other people responsible for construction, including management; if they can express in a deep sense their real needs and desires; if they can feel that the project is designed for them as people not as abstractions, then the sense of community will have started before the project is even built and it will continue to develop.

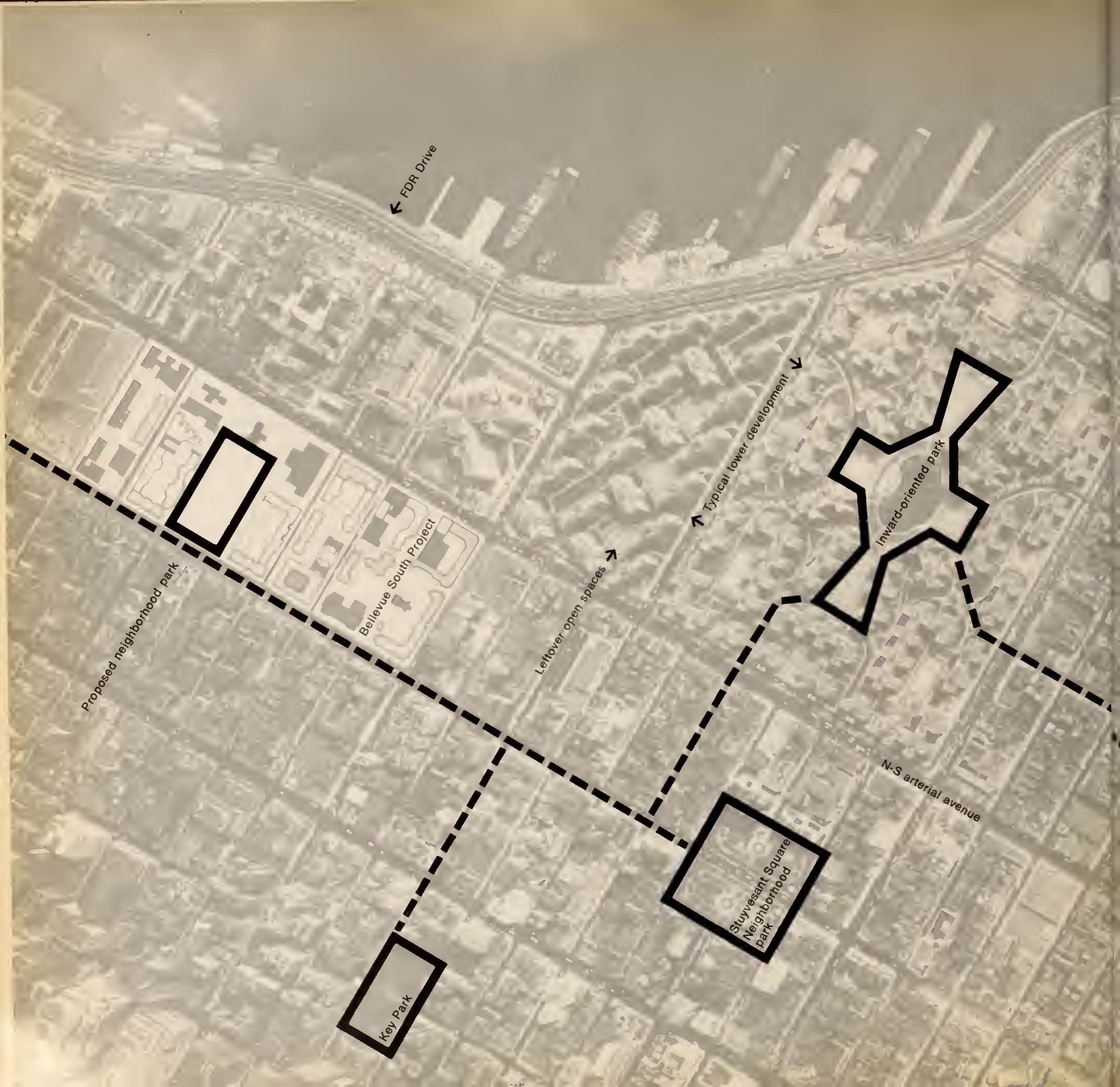
The early colonies in Israel were established on this very same principle and it worked. Even before they migrated to Israel, groups of young people formed themselves together into a functioning organism for several years. When they arrived in Israel they worked together and then finally move to a piece of land where they built their own community as a group. There was absolutely no lag time before these colonies had the feeling of completely functioning and expressive communities. We ourselves have had much the same (though not as complete) experience with a housing development financed, built and operated by the Longshoreman's Union in San Francisco, St. Francis Square, where the sense of community was shortly achieved.

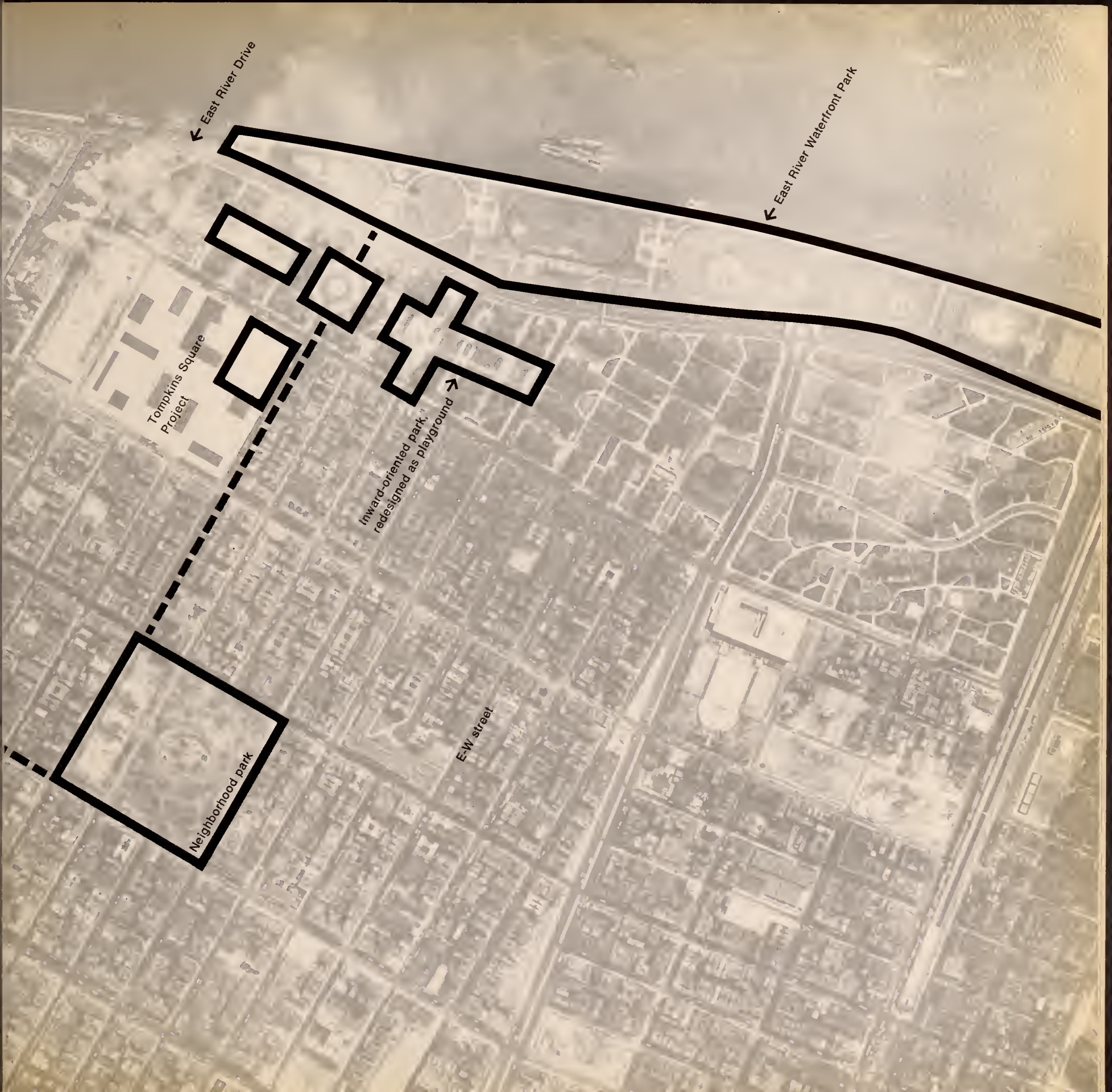
Open Space Network

The existing open spaces in New York City are ranged into a network of types, clearly expressed and orderly in pattern. The network is outward oriented and inward oriented. Starting from the street and the house, the system moves outward to avenue, to neighborhood plaza, vest pocket park, neighborhood park, and the area-wide waterfronts and major recreational parks. Inwardly, it progresses from street to entrance to interior malls and courts, playgrounds and roof decks. The division is not arbitrary. It reflects a sequence which links the private to the public domain, the personal to the community. It thus shapes all aspects of the city. This sequence should be emphasized and enlarged upon. It should be reinforced. It should **not** be blurred.

Recently the new projects have introduced a new type of open space which is completely unintegrated with the larger system. It is simply a vast matrix into which tall buildings are placed. It has not been working as part of the network. Though we need a new type of open space in the city to respond to the new scale and type of housing, the new must be integrated into the original network. New developments are larger, automobile traffic has proliferated until the street is no longer safe, and vertical circulation has become as easy as horizontal circulation.

As demands increase the network has to change. What is significant, however, is to maintain an interrelation of all the parts. Building spaces are linked—lobby, elevator, corridor, living space, private space. In the same way open spaces must be linked together into a clear and operating network.


FDR Drive
Typical tower development
Inward-oriented park
Bellevue South Project
Leftover open spaces
Proposed neighborhood park
N-S arterial avenue
Stuyvesant Square Neighborhood park
Key Park


East River Drive
East River Waterfront Park
Tompkins Square Project
Inward-oriented park, redesigned as playground
E-W street
Neighborhood park

Street

The dominant order of the grid street system has set the pattern of open spaces in New York as it has in so many other major American cities. Where the grid does not exist this is because of an area's early origins, as in Lower Manhattan, which harks back to the patterns brought with them by the Dutch settlers, or because of the influences of topography and natural features in the boroughs outside of Manhattan.

The grid system has set a tone and a New York character. Within the city, particularly in Manhattan, the primary open space in amount and influence—probably also in terms of importance—is the street itself.

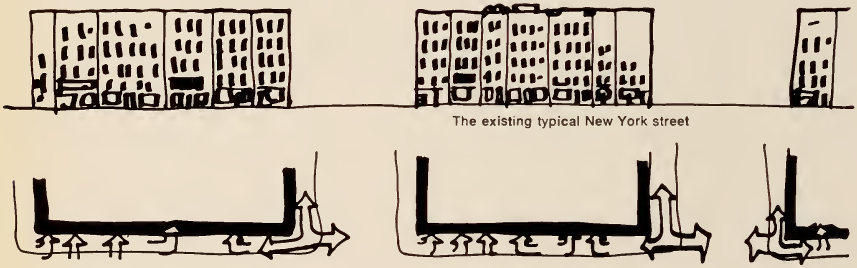
New York **streets** are of three kinds. These three are most clearly seen on Manhattan but they have their counterparts in the other boroughs as well. First are the north-south arterial avenues; second are the east-west arterial streets such as 14th, 72nd, 96th, etc.; and third are the narrower east-west streets from river to river. These set the dominant character.

In recent years the high speed automobile expressway—curving in character, sometimes designed as a parkway along the Hudson, sometimes knitted into the fabric of the buildings as along East River Drive—has been overlaid on the grid, establishing within its zone of influence a new form to the street as a traffic carrier.

The street has been paramount in Manhattan. Its primary function has always been to provide access to buildings. Its secondary functions have been as a principal source of light and air for buildings, as the locus for commercial activity, and as play space for children (in the residential neighborhoods). The New York street has been **the** primary place for social interaction.

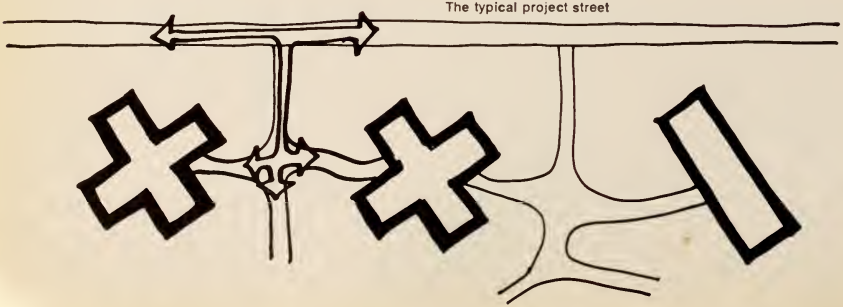
Until recently the streets of New York were lined with buildings along the sidewalks. With few exceptions, structures paralleled the street—on avenues, or arterials, or narrower residential

1


The existing typical New York street

2

The typical project street



1
The existing street is a linear system—uses are lined up along the edges, entrances are direct, interest is continuous for the walking experience in a rhythmic quality. Doorways, window displays, people, color, texture all enliven the life of the pedestrian.

2
The project street offers little visual experience for the pedestrian and a sense of estrangement for the inhabitant.

The New York street has been a play space for children from early times to the present.

streets. Eave lines were similar; entrances to buildings (either direct or via stoops) uniformly ran the length of the street. There were no setbacks except in unusual circumstances for public buildings, and a relatively uniform facade characterized the city.

The character of use of the ground floor of buildings varied. Typically on the avenues and arterials the lower floors are devoted to stores and other commercial establishments. On east-west streets the residential use went down to the ground floor, although even this pattern has changed in recent times. Mixed use at the ground level has appeared much more in Manhattan than in the other boroughs. Yet the dominant character remains: a grid of streets lined by contiguous buildings with commercial activity on the ground floor.

Heights of buildings tended to vary according to street type. In Manhattan, buildings were higher on the avenues and the arterials, and lower on the streets. This pattern is to a lesser extent typical of the other boroughs as well. This pattern "feels" like New York. It does not "feel" like anywhere else. It makes, in addition to its architectonic qualities, for a lively, exciting city to be in. The east-west streets are quieter but they are never far from an avenue lined with shops. A walk through New York, particularly Manhattan, is enlivened all the way by interesting store fronts, exciting displays, colorful activities [Jacobs]. Walking in New York is an **enjoyable** activity, as in most European cities. The visual character and the people character are similar.

Wherever this pattern of interest—of multiple use along the streets, and of close distance to the commercial activities—is violated, the urban quality of excitement and vitality is diminished.

The grid of streets has also established another important New York characteristic—its quality of social and psychological accessibility. The uniformity of spacing and the normal pattern of every building facing on the sidewalk has tended to emphasize interrelation rather than isolation.

The street has made neighborhoods and has encouraged the quality of mixing. Jane Jacobs has devoted considerable thought to this quality in her book, **The Death and Life of Great American Cities.** Enclaves have **not** been formed. Buildings have been "available."

Rockefeller Center was the first modern complex to modify the pattern and was exemplary in

Wherever the pattern of interest, of multiple use along the street, of close distance to the commercial activities, is violated, the urban quality of excitement and vitality is diminished.

recognizing its validity. Though it was designed on a superblock principle, with big buildings set at the core of the development, a well-scaled mall in the form of an interior arcade brought the sense of street and the passerby into the development.

Flexibility is another desirable characteristic of the existing street pattern and its uses. Store fronts along streets have had other uses as well because of their availability. They have been used for store front churches and small social clubs. Recently, along First Avenue, a considerable number of new sidewalk cafes and evening gathering places have cropped up as a lively addition.

It would be hoped that small neighborhood museums could eventually develop in the same way, instead of being buried behind travertine facades in the usual "cultural centers." Its very flexibility has made the New York street survive.

The newer developments, including many we have been asked to survey, have destroyed the quality and character of the New York street. In the process they have begun to destroy the "feel" of New York.

The new developments tend to be inward rather than outward oriented. Their buildings, designed as point towers or slabs, face away from the street, rising from large areas of open space; they fracture the grain of the city. Often they do not even line up with the grid but are typically cruciform, often at an angle to the street. Since they are not contiguous to the street they form enclaves which become exclusive rather than inclusive.

The existing pattern of street fronts is broken. The vast open spaces are neither urban nor suburban in character. The continuous linear and lively character of the street has been yanked apart—openings appear like cavities in a tooth—the walking experience no longer exists. New York is no longer there. This might be in Los Angeles or St. Louis or any other place for that matter.

It develops the kind of quality which Gertrude Stein had in mind when she said ". . . there is no there there."

What these new developments violate is the intimacy, interest, humanity and excitement of the New York street.

Urban Qualities of Streets

The salvation and preservation of the New York street depends on maintaining its urban characteristics.

New York streets should be treated differently from suburban ones. It is vital to differentiate between the highly urbanized Manhattan street and the residential streets in other boroughs, some of which are closer to the suburban village character.

The **urban street** is characteristically bounded by structures. It is hard surfaced from building line to building line. Its two essential characteristics are that the street itself be hard surfaced and that it be terminated on each side by masonry or other hard materials. New York, particularly Manhattan, has always had an enormously powerful urban character because this quality of the urban street has predominated.

Along Central Park the ground surrounding the Park is terminated in a stone wall **beyond** which the plantings of the park are seen.

The quality of urbanity can be maintained in private gardens and courts as well. The garden of the Museum of Modern Art is bounded by masonry walls **along the street facade.** The small garden at the front of New York row houses still functions urbanistically. It is typically down several steps or enclosed by the stoop.

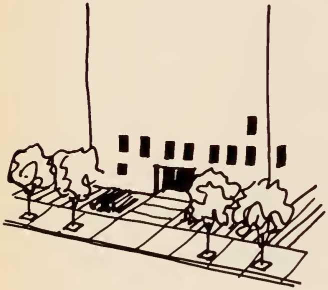
The quality of urbanity does not imply a lack of plantings. Trees are welcome in a city like New York, not only visually but ecologically as well. To maintain an urban character, street trees should be planted within paving, preferably level with the sidewalk. Even flowers are successful in character and color if they are contained—either in tubs or surrounded by low curbings.

The suburban street, in contrast to the urban street, has a mixture of hard and soft materials **on the ground plane** with the latter usually dominating and the bounding elements (when they are buildings) separated from the hard ground plane by plantings.

The urban street goes awry when plantings and trees, flowers and shrubs, are planted in the suburban manner against buildings as foundation planting or in the odd, leftover spaces between buildings, or at corners. The character is then wrong—the street becomes suburbanized, the spaces which could be put to better use become desolate, adequate maintenance is impossible, and vandalism is bound to occur.

Planting must be there because you want it—not because you have a left over space and don't know what to do with it. "Cute" planting or suburban-type flower beds are completely inappropriate to New York.

1



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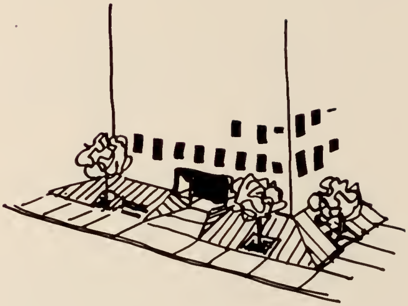

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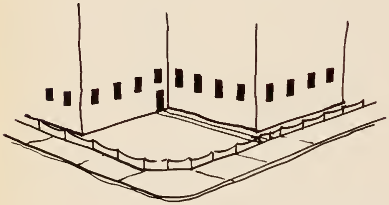

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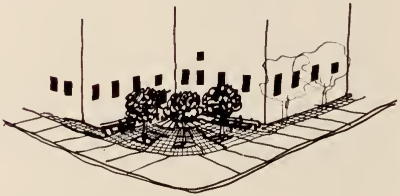


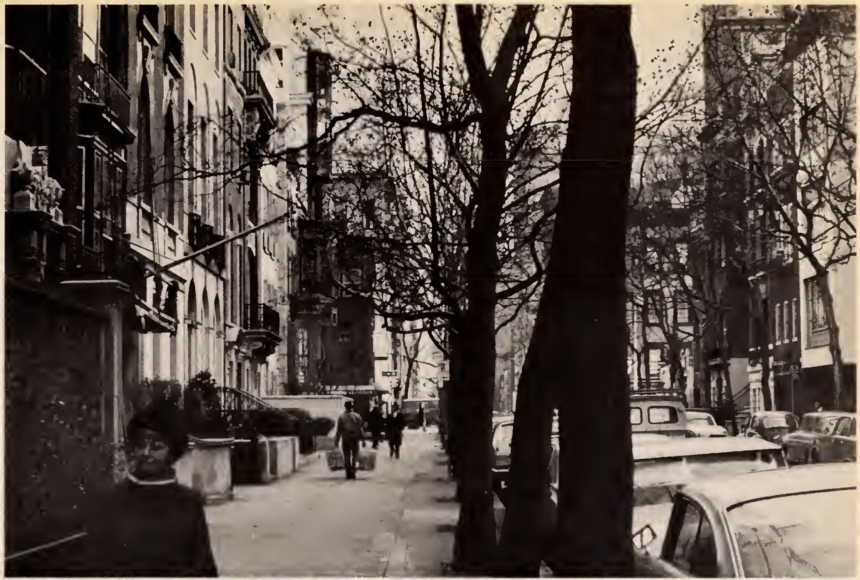
1
Trees should be bold and in scale with towers—usually it is wise to bring them down to the ground not in raised "planters," a non-urban word and approach.

2
Sometimes sloping masonry planes can be used with benches inset if raised quality is required at buildings.

3
Typical left-over space at corner with cruciform tower—windswept and a catchall for refuse.

4
Modification to the above. The area can be paved as a small plaza. If it is on the sunny side, benches and fountains can make it a charming place to sit.

1



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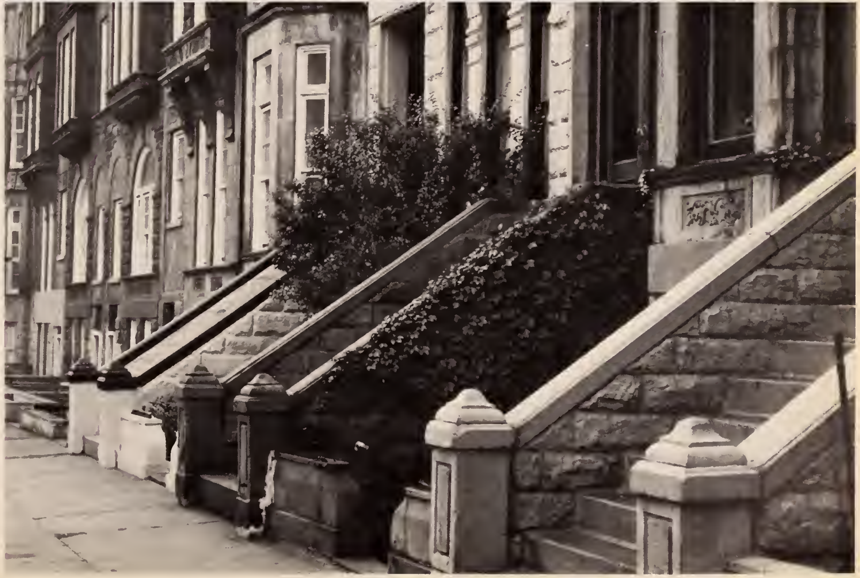


1
A handsome New York residential street in the mid-sixties. The urban quality is strong and handsome. Trees rise directly out of the pavings. Entrance gardens are enclosed by walls and the new modern buildings maintain the scale and the character of the older townhouses.

2
The small garden at the front of New York row houses has functioned urbanistically. It is down several steps or enclosed by the stoop.

Plazas

It has been said that Americans are not a "plaza people" as are the Italians and French—the implication is that plazas do not fit our life style and therefore we should not build them.

This is demonstrably not true, particularly in New York. The problem has arisen only when plazas did not relate to any activity, when they were simply vast or sterile spaces designed only as foregrounds for buildings or with no functional reason for their being.

Several respondents to questionnaires in the Penn Station South area asked for more plazas. One was very succinct, "We do not need meaningless plazas containing a handful of benches," she writes, "we **do** need open plazas that contain a restaurant, or shops that can be utilized by the neighborhood and which by attracting large numbers are thereby self policing."

The few well used plazas in New York are successful for the same reason the European plazas are successful—they have a use, they become significant additions to the New York

2

3

4

1 to 4

The central plaza in a newly redeveloped middle income housing area of Portland, five blocks from downtown. The Plaza is 180 x 300 and through its use of levels, steps and ramps, establishes the quality of an amphitheater for events. The fountain doubles as a play space for children and teenagers, and seating areas abound.

scene. Life goes on around them as well as within them. They invite participation. They are well scaled. Even the ineptly designed ones—when they can be used—are much enjoyed.

Climate is an important consideration. Plazas should be on the sunny side of a building, where they will be warm in winter, out of the wind, shaded by trees against the hot sun in the summer. They should be inviting to sit in, with places to sit rather than perch, and the pavement underfoot should reflect the leisurely quality of close-in examination. Fountains can cool in summer and, as at Paley Plaza, act as an acoustical device by substituting pleasant sounds above the raucous noise of trucks.

I have described the furnishing and paving potentials for plazas elsewhere. These are important—they enrich experience and please the eye.

Most significantly the difference between monumental plazas and neighborhood plazas should be recognized. It is the difference between an enormous lobby and a pleasant inviting entrance. The monumental plaza has little significance in New York. We do not accumulate, any longer, vast throngs of people to prayer or to hear presidential announcements. The radio and television have taken care of that. What we **do** need are small scaled plazas as outdoor living rooms; places to sit and see and be seen. We need places for the sidewalk cafe and the restaurant, a milling place for neighborhood residents, a place outside, a community theater or recreation center. Our plazas need to be lived in.

Vest Pocket Parks

Vest pocket parks or plazas are an old tradition in Europe. They have not been used often enough in New York. These parks must relate to the street on which they front, both in function and design. Interior commons are **not** vest pocket parks—the essential ingredient of being a small vestibule adjacent to the street is lacking.

Each neighborhood surely will have its own requirements. In some areas the requirement would be for play; in others, as gathering places for teenagers; in others, mothers and tots may dominate the scene; in others the park may well be a place for revival meetings or village-type fairs. Each can reflect the ethnic or other character of its neighborhood.

However, the insertion of vest pocket parks should not destroy the street character. They function best on small quiet residential streets at mid-block locations where they can also serve as lobbies to interior mews or commons.

Neighborhood-Oriented Parks

There are too few neighborhood parks in New York and they are poorly distributed. Much of this inadequacy can be overcome by collecting many of the usual odd bits and pieces of project open space and organizing them into outward facing neighborhood-oriented spaces.

An original reason for the dearth of neighborhood squares aparently lies in the 1811 Commissioners' Report for New York:

> *"It may, to many, be a matter of surprise, that so few vacant spaces have been left, and those so small, for the benefit of fresh air, and consequent preservation of health. Certainly, if the City of New York were destined to stand on the side of a small stream, such as the Seine or the Thames, a great number of ample spaces might be needful; but those large arms of the sea which embrace Manhattan Island, render its situation, in regard to health and pleasure, as well as to convenience of commerce, peculiarly felicitous; when, therefore, from the same causes, the price of land is so uncommonly great, it seemed proper to admit the principles of economy to greater influence than might, under circumstances of a different kind, have consisted with the dictates of prudence and the sense of duty . . ."*

Possibilities for open plazas and courtyards covered over for winter play and festivals.

There is a very real need in the housing developments themselves for a publicly-oriented open space which is obviously available for **all** users, including project people and neighborhood people. Many of our consultants have emphasized this point and our own analysis indicates how important a factor in the environment it can become. The inward space serves one set of needs which are significant. However, these semi-private project-oriented open areas tend to alienate and isolate a community from its neighborhood. Further, there are many needs and requirements which only a neighborhood facility can perform.

When neighborhood-oriented parks exist they serve as mixing bowls. When they are properly programmed and designed they are heavily used by all age groups. People can identify with them. They become a focus for the community.

Several such community parks come to mind. Tompkins Square Park is near one of our projects. It **is** a community focal point. It is intensively used by the people from Houston Street to 14th Street and between Second Avenue and Avenue D. There is a wide variety of uses—bandstand, teenage areas, and toddler playgrounds, sitting areas for adults and the elderly. During hot summer nights it is a cool outdoor living room. Ratensky points out that even the tensions and conflicts surrounding it reflect its significance to the neighborhood.

Washington Square Park, of course, has become famous because of the intense defense it has aroused within its neighborhood whenever change within the park was threatened or whenever building activity was proposed around it. It is, of course, more than a neighborhood park since it serves the university as well as the Village and terminates the long vista of Fifth Avenue. Its multiplicity and intensity of use at all times is in contrast to many of the dead open spaces we have seen.

The question has arisen of how neighborhood-oriented open spaces should be designed. Our analysis indicates several requirements for success. The first of these is that they extend from avenue to avenue, street to street. They should be visible all the way around where possible. For this reason, in our study of Bellevue South, we have proposed that the large open space be increased in size and extended from First to Second Avenue. Secondly, neighborhood parks should be surrounded by buildings. They should have a sense of enclosure on the **other** side of the street and it should be continuous. Thirdly, there should be a feeling of openness—of inclusiveness rather than exclusiveness. The area should invite people in. As a concomitant, the park should not be barricaded by cyclone fences.

Design cannot be covered by this report. That is the function of a talented and creative designer. Several have been at work in the city—at Jacob Riis Plaza, in the new playground on the west side of Central Park, and others. But functions and approaches may be mentioned. These are urban spaces, usually limited in size. Functional needs as well as aesthetic ones must be met. There can be much use for bandstands as places for evening concerts. There is need for music and dancing areas, particularly for teenagers. Different levels can double as amphitheaters and play areas in addition to adding dimension to a flat city. There should be some open areas for games, play areas for little and not so little people. Adults need more private areas out of the stream of traffic where they can sit and read or feed the squirrels or play checkers.

Finally, success can be enhanced by participation. This can take the form of planning and programming facilities. It can also involve actual assistance in construction of some of the facilities as, I understand, was so successfully accomplished at LaGuardia Houses.

As to planting, it is a boon in the city when it is in large enough groupings. But the urban open space should emphasize urban qualities. Lawns and big trees, mounds and beautiful pavings, handsome light fixtures for well-lit evenings, well designed benches and trash cans and drinking fountains and splashing water make an urban park. Shrubbery does not. Plantings should be grouped so that they are out of the way of bicycles and games and do not need to be barricaded for protection. They should draw people to walk among them on paths and walkways, not say "keep out."

Waterfronts

One of the great environmental resources of New York City is its waterfronts, recognized as early as the first Commissioners' Plan of 1811, when they said, "Those large arms of the sea which embrace Manhattan render its situation in regard to health and pleasure . . . peculiarly felicitous."

Unfortunately, these two great arms have been in the main effectively and visually blocked off—on the East Side (up to 40th Street) by the East River Drive freeway and on the West Side by an elevated structure and the pier-heads. The East Side, it is true, has long thin linear parks between the drive and the river. East River Park is very under-used because of its lack of accessibility and the absence of life around it. Though the riverfronts have been largely blocked off by high speed automobile expressways, they still can be **viewed** as open space from afar. No further blockages should be allowed.

Future planning should encourage the air rights development over both the East River Drive and the West Side Highway, both of which can be tunnelled and encased by terraces and green parks as well as buildings. The new Lower Manhattan Plan, prepared for the City Planning Commission, introduces this concept, and the Waterside Development will realize it. It is hoped that it will be built. "The architects' primary effort, apart from revisions to the vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems, is to introduce waterfront areas and buildings of 'humane' scale . . . the increased accessibility of the waterfront would be an enormous advantage and the complicated (building) groupings suggest a lively and interesting environment." [Elizabeth Kassler].

1

1
The topmost layer is a long, beautifully designed promenade and park.

2
In Brooklyn Heights (near Cadman Plaza) there is a superb demonstration of a freeway hung from the cliff at three levels, which integrates the freeway into the grain of the neighborhood.

STANDISH
ARMS
HOTEL
KITCHENETTES
PERMANENT
& TRANSIENT

1

1
Waterfronts can be preserved and include freeways when they are designed according to the fine principles shown at Carl Schurz Park. This is a magnificent example of a neighborhood development extending over a freeway. The park spans the freeway directly to the waterfront —both are heavily used and neither interferes wih the other.

The United Nations development pioneered the idea of the multiple use of a highway corridor, demonstrating for everyone to analyze the potential inherent in integrated planning and design. Here the city extends over the freeway to the river and establishes a mutual advantage to both. The same can be observed on the Upper East Side in the 80's where fine housing plus parks demonstrates this principle.

In Brooklyn Heights, near Cadman Plaza, there is a superb demonstration of a freeway hung from the cliff at three levels, whose topmost layer is a long, beautifully designed promenade and park. This preserves views, provides open space, and integrates, in an incredibly fine way, the freeway into the grain of the neighborhood.

The riverfronts and oceanfronts should not be wasted as places for high speed expressways. Narrow waterfront parks separated from the city by highways are simply not used.

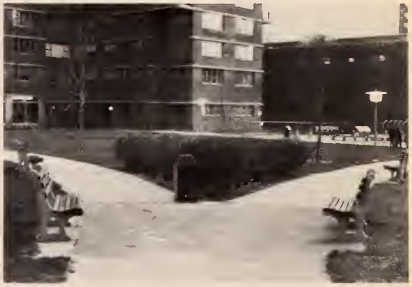
Accessibility of open space is a major factor in its use. It is not only its presence which is important, but whether it can be readily reached by people of all ages. The two parks along the East River—FDR Park and Carl Schurz Park—are a demonstration of this principle. FDR Park is more than twice as large as Carl Schurz Park and serves a comparable number of people. But Carl Schurz Park is connected directly to its neighborhood while FDR Park is separated from its neighborhood by the freeway.
The result is that Carl Schurz Park is used by twice as many people. Over a three month period the figures were 136,945 for Carl Schurz as against 70,850 for FDR Park even though the latter serves an area with greater demand for park space.

When an open space is across a heavy traffic arterial, children will find access difficult Even adults are open-space-less when they are divorced from their neighborhoods by freeways or other impenetrable barriers.

Entrances and Malls

The most important of the inward oriented open spaces is the entrance, the connection to the street system. Entrances and connections need to establish a character of welcome, a strong and unequivocal personal relation to the inhabitant. One of the enormously frustrating characteristics of most new developments has been the impersonality of entrance. This is affected by placement and treatment—the two are mutually related. If the entrance is buried deep within a project, far from the street, difficult to get to, then the lifeline to the city's life processes is cut and a feeling of estrangement results. It is clear that newer projects cannot maintain **all** their entrances **on** the street but wherever feasible this should be encouraged.

2



2
Typical project entrance. No relation to street, curving walk is psuedo-suburban, difficult to find, no celebration of entrance.

Entrances should be signified, even significant. The stoop quality, so typical of New York, might be continued as a large friendly milling area adjacent to each building entrance.

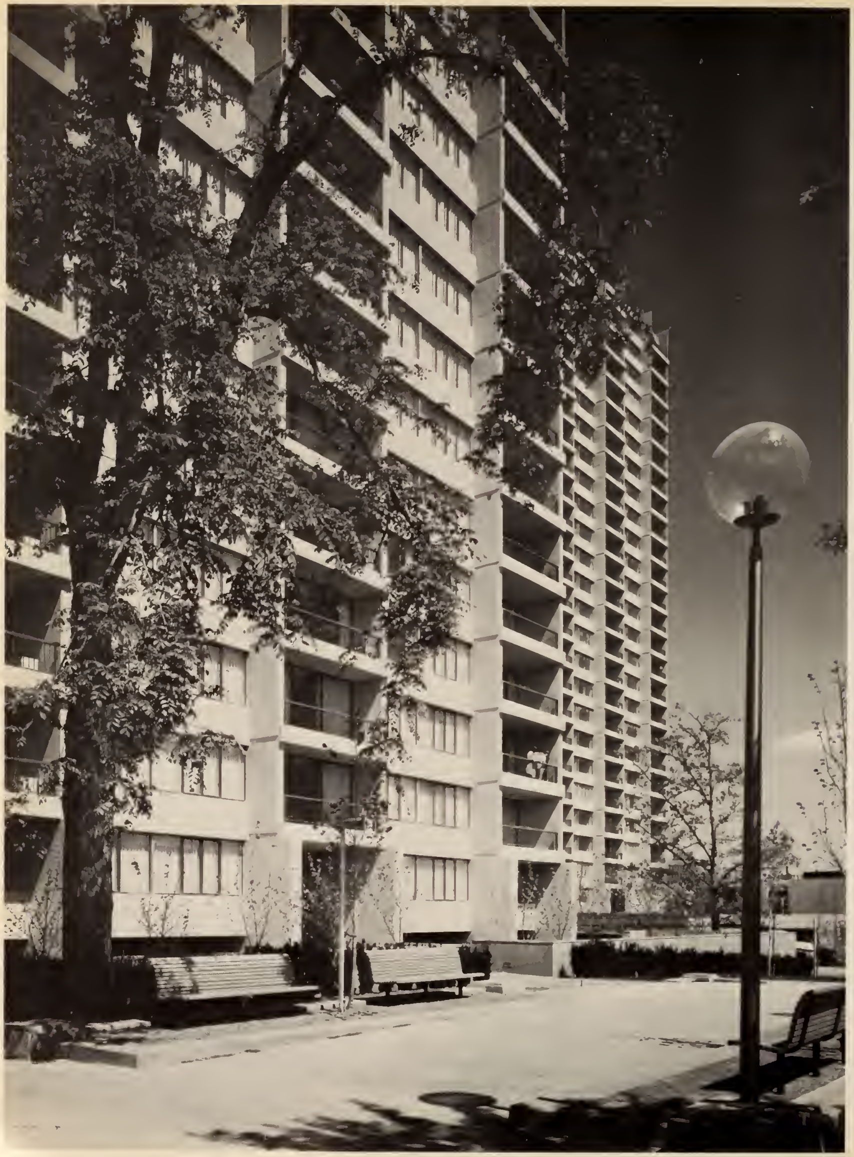
Canopies over entrances can celebrate the process of coming home which is such a significant feeling for most people.

Special identification, even by color, should be encouraged. This is particularly significant for young people and children who need to know where they are and readily identify their home.

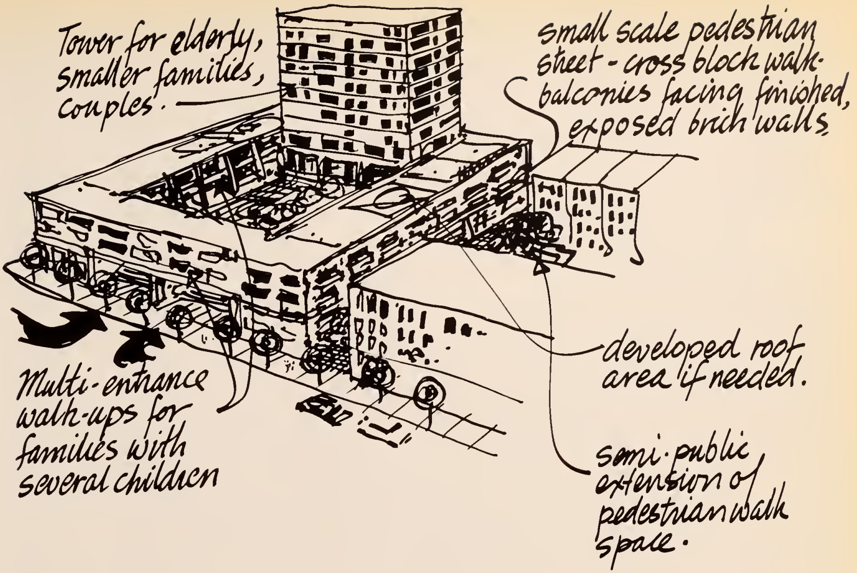
Lighting can play its part. A considerable part of the feeling of estrangement (even fear) occurs on winter evenings when walks are inadequately lighted.

If entrances are to be developed off of streets, accessible only by inner walkways, then **walkways** themselves must be carefully designed to encourage use and a quality of life.

Paths to front doors should be wide and straight, not curvilinear. They should, wherever possible, have multi-purpose uses along them so that they do not seem dead. When possible, shops, schools, play areas, should abut them. It is the dreary nowhereness which must be avoided.



An interior mall, collecting the inward oriented entrances and walkways, can act as the spine of a development.


Tower for elderly, smaller families, couples.
small scale pedestrian street - cross block walk-balconies facing finished, exposed brick walls
developed roof area if needed.
semi-public extension of pedestrian walk space.
Multi-entrance walk-ups for families with several children

An interior mall, connecting the inward oriented entrances and walkways, can act as the spine of a development. The most successful projects we have designed or seen are those whose dominant interior spaces all related to a mall.

The mall should extend the quality of street into the project. Buildings can relate to it, as well as many of the other facilities such as small shops, community rooms, play areas, sitting areas, and the small interior commons which can be such a pleasant addition to the New York living pattern.

The essential ingredient will be the quality of urbanity—the interior space, focused on its mall, should emphasize urban characteristics, not suburban ones. This interior space should not try to capture, in capsule, the qualities of the larger parks. It is the attempt to do this which has caused so many of the dead spaces scattered throughout New York's newer housing.

They should be designed like promenades, small plazas—scaled to human life, and not be vast and windswept. They should be **enclosed by buildings.** Where these interior spaces have been least successful is where the space dominates and the buildings are placed in it, as at Penn Station South, Tompkins Square, Stuyvesant Town, Peter Cooper Village, etc. Success has come only when the buildings dominate and the space is enclosed within the complex.

The playgrounds of older times used to be the street and the alley.

Playgrounds

New York has always been a children's city. The demographers tell us further that by 1980, 1/2 of our population will be under 21. The needs of our younger people are being less effectively met in our cities than those of any other group. More and more we need places for young people to play.

The playground of older times used to be the street and the alley, the sidewalk and the vacant lot. They still are to a certain extent, but the high speed and danger of the ubiquitous automobile has made a separation between street and playground well nigh imperative.

Play needs are of different kinds. They divide by age groups—toddlers, active youngsters, teenagers, young adults. Each group has needs and requirements of its own. Each needs different scales of spaces and different kinds of facilities. It is for this reason that, in a later section, we have spoken of the need for an open space network which is linked but has individual parts.

The great danger is to think of children's playgrounds in isolation. They should be thought of as part of the total environment. Play, as such, is only a small part of the child's experience. All of his time in and outside of play spaces should enrich his life. He needs a **total** environment from which he should learn in a playful way. His very isolation inside a specially designated playground limits his interaction with his environment. We have discovered that play is children's early way of experiencing life. It is an educative not a frivolous activity. His whole area must be accessible and interesting for him to explore; must be designed as a rich experience, including play and work places, leisure places for adults, shops, craft areas as well.

The ubiquitous materials of **playgrounds** have been asphalt paving, cyclone fencing, a few swings and slides. DULL. Uninteresting. NOT USED. Also dangerous. The newer playgrounds are a great stride forward. At Jacob Riis, an imaginative and "fun" place has been designed which can be a prototype for others. Changes in level, color, texture, sand, sculpture, water, arbors, small amphitheaters, all together in an integrated design, provide a joyful experience for young people. It is thoughtless to think however that in and of itself the "new" playground idea will solve the cities' **real** needs. They are extremely visible of course and can be quickly installed, but they are a limited solution to urban problems.

We suggest that when the New York environment becomes what it should be, then separated areas for play—isolated from the everyday life of the city—will (except in specialized recreation areas) not be needed [Parr and others].

Play areas where noisy play goes on should, of course, be separated so as to allow adults the privilege of quiet. Older people should be in the position to overlook playgrounds for their activity, without always being subjected to possible encounters with bicycling or roller skating kids [Alice Brophy]. The noise factor should be considered in locating playgrounds because older people **do** have a rather different life pattern. They like to observe activity, but they do not always want to be involved in experiencing it.

Interaction for both groups, however, **is** important. It is important for young people to experience the quality of age, but equally useful for older people to keep alert and lively by interacting with young ones.

Some specific things can be recommended for all project spaces to achieve these results in New York:

1. Mold project terrain to provide a variety of experience at different levels.

2. Provide areas safe from cars.

3. Make sure that building structure, drainage, planting, pavings, walls, etc., which are functional requirements, also enrich the sensory response.

4. Use natural forces—sun, light, shadow, color, to enrich the lower levels of projects.

5. Bring variety of uses into projects—make it possible for stores, craft areas, etc., to become part of the young person's daily experience.

6. In connection with the above, make the activities of adults, particularly male adults, more visible to young people. Usually adults are only visible to children when they are at leisure. This, Baum feels, is extremely frustrating to the adult male and limiting for children. Young people, particularly in cities, need to see their fathers and other adult males functioning in a prideful way.

7. Allow dirt areas as well as grass areas to be part of projects so children can dig and roll and mud in them. (We recognize the management problems inherent in this recommendation.)

8. Model horizontal spaces by building placement in size and shape so that they develop areas of varied interest and scale in and of themselves.

Climate change in New York is a factor in play area design which is consistently overlooked. A good deal of the year it is either too hot or too cold for outdoor play. During many months it rains or snows. Outdoor playgrounds are really only usable in good weather. For the rest of the year, children are either forced to remain indoors where they (and their parents) become miserable or they are out in inclement weather.

Special facilities should be provided for sheltered play areas. These should be designed as part of playgrounds, as protected arbors, or as part of building arcades. We have observed several projects where this has been done—immediately they are heavily used and children huddle under the protective eave lines in their games. In existing projects these protective devices can be added, particularly in central spaces which now tend to be so barren.

We propose that in all new projects interior, as well as exterior, play spaces should be built. These should not be confined to children but should also be available for teenagers and adults.

Roofscape

The roofscape offers a new and exciting potential for the development of open space in New York. As I pointed out in "Cities":

> *Rooftop gardens give a dimension to modern city living which is impossible on the ground. Up high on the roof there are views over other buildings, sunsets to see, a relaxing freedom from cars and other traffic, a privacy and intimacy which no other city facility can bring and all of which are difficult to achieve at street level. As our modern cities build higher, and as open spaces become more difficult to acquire, the use of the open space on the roof—which normally is wasteland—becomes more imperative. The simplest roof garden is a small balcony where a person can step outside into the open air and stretch, and grow the potted geranium which keeps him aware of growing things; it can do much to ameliorate the claustrophobia which city living imposes.*
>
> *But the true roof garden can go much further than this. If it is properly designed it can provide all the elements of a ground level garden; it can catch the warmth of the sun, protect people from winds, point toward distant views, and give a very special flavor to outdoor living. And if it is designed initially as part of the structural system of the building, there are few limits to the plants, trees, and even fountains which can be placed on it. There is, of course, a certain limit to the depth of soil one can pile on a roof because of weight factors. Since wet soil must be computed at 110 pounds per cubic foot, this does pose special problems in roof gardening. These are mostly connected with inadequate depths of soil for the growth of large trees and also the rapid evaporation of water from the soil, since no great capillary action can bring deep waters up from below. However, other than the careful selection of types of trees and shrubs from those able to survive in shallow soil and a careful maintenance program of watering, spraying and fertilizing, gardening on roofs has few special requirements or limitations. Almost any beautiful garden can be enjoyed on a roof.*
>
> ***Cities,** Lawrence Halprin*

The use of upper levels has been exploited to great advantage in cities other than New York. These demonstrations can be capitalized on. In San Francisco, Hartford, Oakland, Montreal, and others, large developments have been built whose roofs (either above parking structures or lower building elements) have been completely integrated as part of the project. The United Nations Plazas are part of a vertical, three-dimensional open space system over a roof.

The fact is, of course, that in a city like New York, where open space is at such a premium, the use of roof spaces as functioning members of the open space network makes economic as well as aesthetic sense.

On a functional level decks can be used for playgrounds as well as gardens, they can be plazas upon which community spaces open, they can be promenades linking buildings to each other, and by now we know that they can be heliports.

A point should be made about their design. The usual technique (to allow for root depths of trees) has been to encase plantings in raised boxes (as at Tompkins Square). This is sometimes sucessful—more often than not the raised boxes develop a cluttered, uninviting look. There are other techniques—mounding, dropping plant boxes between beams and girders, and the use of new lightweight soil mixes which allow planting of lawns in less than 4" of soil. New varieties of "thin" paving materials give great variation and freedom in design. The roof can be anything you wish it to be.

Commercial Space

The concept of **3-dimensional use** has cropped up not only in terms of open space but in the design of **commercial space.**

Respondents to our questionnaires sum up succinctly the attitude toward multiple use of space in housing areas. When asked their reaction to their present environment, one commented that it was "dull." Another said, "It is not a neighborhood to wander around in since there is nothing to see." She had liked the Village better because, she said, it was "more lively, interesting." What should be here (in Penn Station South): a movie with more intelligent programs, restaurants, a Kosher delicatessen. But then, in answer to the question of where would you live if not New York, comes the resounding statement, "ONLY IN NEW YORK."

Commercial development in housing areas plays a vital role in community spirit. It can go a long way to answer the question raised before of how quickly a new project can establish a sense of community. It is, after all, in stores, restaurants, barber shops, etc., that people meet and communicate.

Not enough emphasis has been placed on the unstructured liveliness and social interaction that occurs in neighborhood stores. One respondent points out that the great impact on her neighborhood arose when a new cooperative store was opened.

Eisner has pointed out, "It is very difficult to integrate commercial and housing in one building under present programs. A major effort needs to be made to work this out." He goes on to speak of vertical dispositions, "We have always accepted a mixture of uses in horizontal development. Why can we not accept the same mixture in vertical developments? What would be wrong with a grocery store on the 10th floor of a 20-story building or a playground and shopping center on the roof?"

In the West Side Renewal, the zoning restrictions are prohibiting what we would consider successful development of Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues. Commercial areas cannot creep above the 23-foot height, preventing the 3-dimensional development we have proposed.

Recreational-Cultural Facilities

The liveliness and richness of a housing neighborhood depends a good deal on the **recreational and cultural facilities** which are provided. Most housing has been particularly lacking in these facilities and has depended a great deal on the surrounding existing neighborhoods to provide these functions. As a result not only have housing projects themselves been sterile but they have tended to sterilize the neighborhoods into which they have been inserted.

Usually management considers that it is easier to "handle" a project if not too many facilities are available, and if there is no closely-knit, articulated tenant or community group. This is patently wrong.

Jacobs has dealt at length with the inadequacy of use and quality of ground level open space and has pointed out that the windswept, wide open, cyclone fence-protected areas accomplish nothing. Indeed, if anything, the life of teenagers and young people must develop in spite of, rather than because of, that design. It demeans the human spirit.

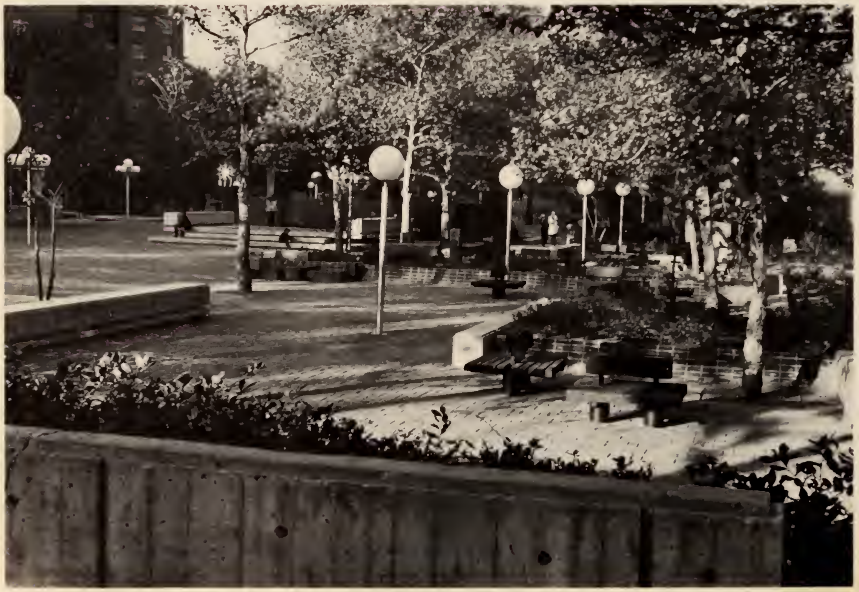
At Penn Station South, in spite of good intentions and excellent ground maintenance, open space is not used, and more play space for young children is needed. Though many of the inhabitants at Penn Station South appreciated the grass and trees, most complained about the lack of adequate faciilties. The open space was fine, they noted, but it does not seem to provide for playgrounds or tennis courts or swimming pools or bicycle paths. At least one comment was aptly urban: "I do not think we should try to ape the suburbs with grass and trees," she wrote. "I think we would be better off with more imaginatively designed areas of concrete, stone and sculpture."

There are community rooms though they are difficult to get to and, because of inadequate programs and facilities, are not used often. There is an attempt underway to get a pool table. There are two ping pong tables available. The Co-op actually draws what it can almost entirely from the cultural supply of the established neighborhood, from the Hudson Guild, and PS 33. It does not itself add to the neighborhood. Ratensky comments, "What is preventing the Co-op from organizing a rich cultural and recreational program? All they have to do is add, say one dollar per room per month and they can buy leadership and materials." It is a point well taken. Even its well maintained grass areas and flowers are not more than a visual relief for the neighborhood since they are fenced off and unusable, exclusive rather than inclusive. They have been termed a visual put-on!

One of our conclusions is that housing developments should not only **add** to the facilities of a neighborhood but integrate with it. Tompkins Square does have roof decks but they are virtually inaccessible. The problem is even an internal one —the play space in the 221 D-3 section of the Tompkins Square project is effectively barricaded from the balance of the property by a cyclone fence precisely placed on the property line.

Public swimming pools have always been a typical feature on the New York scene. They have enormous use, of course, in the hot summer months, but the newer housing developments make no attempt to provide their share, nor when they do to make them available on a wide scale. Ratensky adds a note to the effect that many projects **do** have them but are costly to operate safely according to Board of Health rules and are, therefore, usually operated on a membership fee basis.

The few instances where recreational facilities have been provided have been enormously successful such as (as we have pointed out before) at Jacob Riis housing. The success has, in large measure, been because of orientation to use as well as beauty. The playground at Stephen Wise Homes in the West Side Renewal is far less successful. In spite of the attempt at sculptural enrichment the area seems sterile and unused. There is a powerful lesson here which is simply that design of open space is not decorative or surface ornamentation but depends for its success on its deep and meaningful solution to real needs.



The new Jacob Riis recreational-cultural area. What was once a desolate no man's land converted to active use for all age groups.

Design for Climate

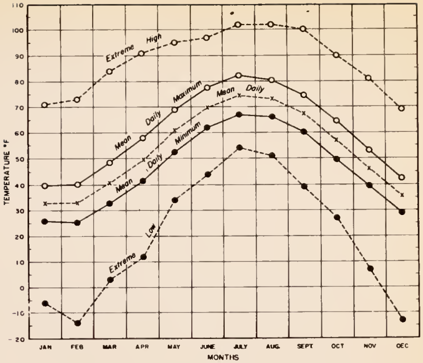
General Climate of the New York Area

New York has a hot, humid temperate climate (Koppen class Cfa) which verges on the sub-tropical in many aspects. It has a relatively mild winter (although this is not the impression of New Yorkers) and short periods of both extreme heat and extreme cold. Chart **1** shows the averages and extremes of New York temperature. The highest recorded temperature was 102°F. and the lowest was —14°F. Temperature exceeds 88°F. only 1% of the time, and it is colder than 8°F. also only 1% of the time.

Precipitation is uniform throughout, with monthly means ranging from 3.2 inches to 4.3 inches, with a yearly normal of 42 inches. Rainfall intensity is often extremely high, and a summer cloudburst may dump up to 1 inch of rain in 15 minutes. (Chart **2**) During the winter a continuous snowfall of over 2 feet is possible, although the mean yearly total is only 29 inches. Snow cover is not persistent, lasting only a few days except in sheltered spots.

Wind velocities are generally stable, with monthly means ranging from 11.8 mph to 17.1 mph. High velocity winds are not common. Those winds with speeds of over 32 mph normally come from the NW, WNW, or NNW. During the summer the prevailing winds are from the S or SW. (Chart **3** and **4**).

1



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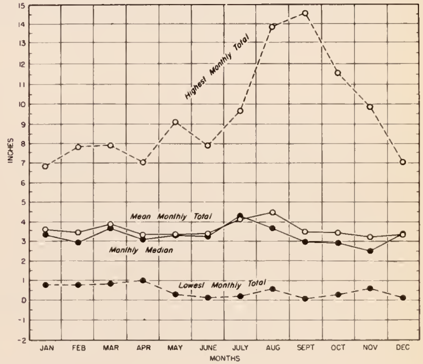

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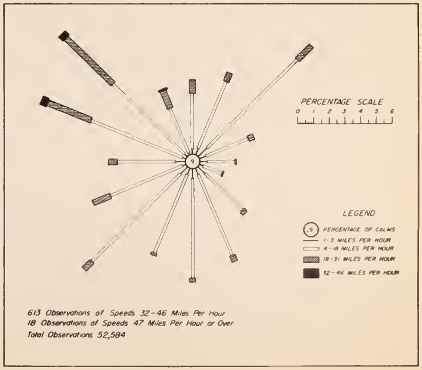
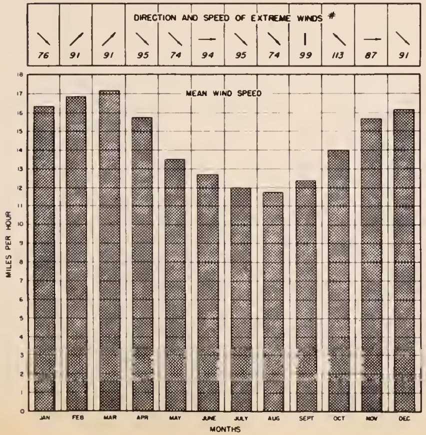


613 Observations of Speeds 32-46 Miles Per Hour
18 Observations of Speeds 47 Miles Per Hour or Over
Total Observations 52,584

4



1
New York Temperatures

2
New York Precipitation

3
New York Wind Direction

4
New York Wind Speed

Possible sunshine varies from 68% in September to 53% in January. There are 4.4% of the daylight hours with heavy fog and 3.6% with heavy smog (haze, smoke or dust). Relative humidity has a mean daily range of from 53% to 74%. In common with other regions of year round precipitation, the humidity is highest during the hottest season.

The Urban Microclimate

Every building changes the climate in its vicinity until, with total urbanization, as has occurred in New York, the climate becomes quite different from that of the native landscape. This climatic change is statistically small, but even a small sustained change can be crucial to a climate. A drop in the average temperature in the Northern Hemisphere of only 1°F. causes noticeable changes in the climate. Studies indicate that during the height of the Ice Age the average temperature was only 6°F. lower than it is today. The urban microclimate differs from natural climates in three important ways:

1. Increased temperature.

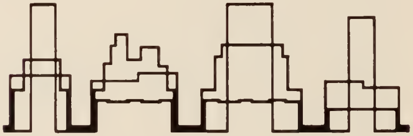
This occurs mainly because of an increase in heat absorbing surfaces. Heat is also added by engines, animal radiation, and domestic and industrial heating. In addition, large quantities of dust in the atmosphere, stirred up by traffic or flung out of exhausts and smokestacks, increases heat absorption. This urbanized increase in heat may sometimes be more than the total heat received by the region under natural conditions. For example, under natural conditions the island of Manhattan may have received 100 calories of radiation per square inch on a cool winter day. The urban heat addition from all the factors noted above has been shown to be about 140 calories of radiation per square inch. Therefore, on many days of the year, the artificially induced heat is greater in percentage than the natural heat, and together they account for the average increase in temperature of the urban environment.

2. Change in the atmosphere.

The urban haze or smog is caused by gases, inert dust, and chemically active dust added to the atmosphere. This air pollution causes increased radiation absorption, as noted above, and also increases fog, snow, hail and rainfall over an urban region in comparison to the surrounding countryside. In addition, wind speed is slower and more turbulent especially at lower levels, because of the increased irregularity of the surface caused by continuous building. Buildings interspersed with open spaces cause a much greater and more complex disruption of air circulation than does a forested or vegetation covered landscape. Aerodynamically speaking, a city landscape is considered much "rougher" than the same area covered with native vegetation. Each building (or continuous structure, in the case of built up blocks) contributes its share of windbreak effect, together with changes in wind direction, increases in wind speed overhead and around the corners, turbulent areas or eddies in the lee side, and even an occasional partial vacuum area. Since the change one structure has on air circulation will prevail for a distance several times the height of the structure, it may be seen that a redeveloped block with several large structures and large open spaces will have a greater disruptive effect on air circulation than will one block of one building (or numerous buildings with shared walls). Some of these increases in wind speed, or areas of turbulence may be quite important on a given building site.

1

Warmer
Smog
Slower winds
More turbulence
Rainier
Snowier
Less moisture
Foggier



2

Cooler
No smog
Windier
Less turbulence
Less rain
Less snow
More moisture
Less fog

Comparison of Urban and Rural Microclimates

1
Metropolis

2
Countryside

The Kasbah at Quarzazate, Morocco. A medieval skyscraper city built to resist heat and windstorms as well as invasion. But for the palm trees, this looks like parts of the Bronx.

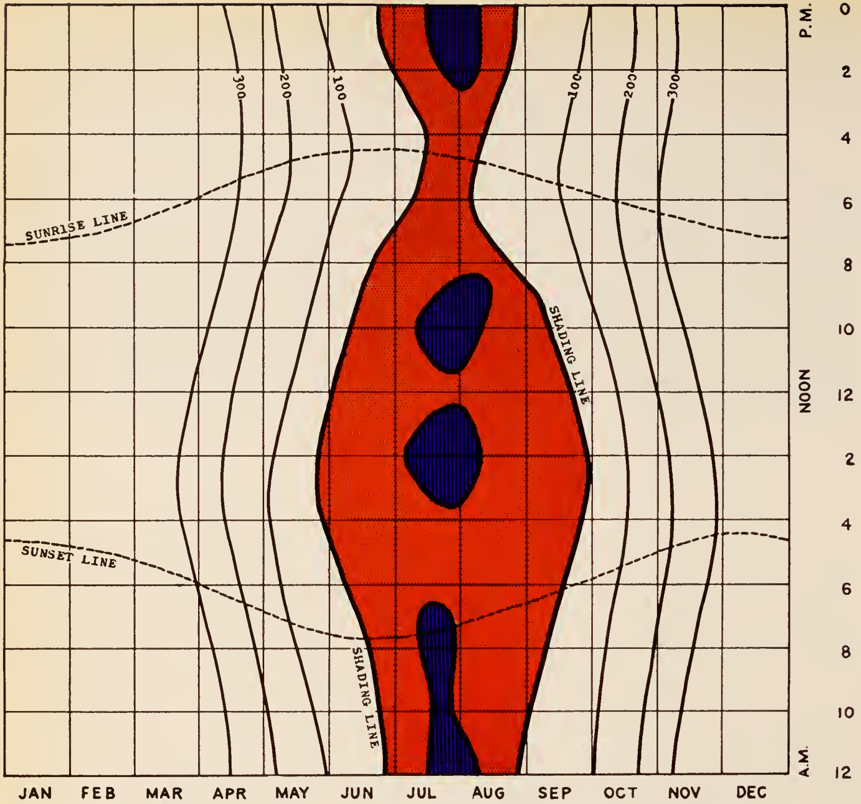
3 Alteration of the hydrology.

This usually takes the form of less ground water and locally lower humidity, even though precipitation is greater. It is caused mainly by the substitution of an impervious surface for the original soil mantle, and the substitution of storm drains for the original streams.

The total effect of an urbanized area like New York on climate is enormous. Taken as a whole the city is usually warmer than the adjacent country by about 1.3°F. However, differences of up to 11°F. have been recorded, and even greater variations are possible within limited areas. Fog frequency in New York has been recorded as much as four times greater than in the hinterland, while the open country is not troubled by smog. Significantly, more snow and rain fall within the built-up area than on its outskirts (both because of the increase in temperature and because of the increase in available nuclei). However, snow melts quicker in the city because of the higher temperature. Also because of the radiation pattern some plants bloom earlier inside a city than they do in the nearby country.

Even though microclimatic knowledge is widely available, most large building projects still go from start to finish without once considering any of the climatic factors involved. It is rare for any changes in plan or even of orientation to take advantage of these climatic facts, even though they are noticeable enough to have been extensively utilized by all primitive cultures for hundreds of years. Ours is the first culture which has ignored the importance of microclimate. This general heedlessness on the part of both public agencies and the private business community should be converted into a conscious response to the possibilities of rational use of microclimatic data. This could not only benefit individual building sites or programs, but could also aid in the control of our urban environment, rather than allowing it to deteriorate further.

There are, of course, several ways to react to the increasingly unpleasant impact of urbanization on microclimate. One way is to design completely indoor, climate-controlled spaces, away from the smog and fumes of cars and air-conditioned for winter and summer comfort. Gardens and walkways can successfully be built indoors as has been demonstrated in many shopping centers and the new Ford Foundation building. We could then ignore the natural climate and produce our own completely interior city. Lacking this we **must** concern ourselves about the natural climate and learn to work with it, using its laws and anticipating the results of our building programs. Otherwise we poison the air we breathe, live in a desert atmosphere of windstorms, turbulence and unseasonable heat or cold.



Practical Applications of Urban Microclimatology

A bioclimatic chart showing the yearly procession of temperature as it is adjusted to human effort is easy to compile for any place which has meteorological data available. These tables are derived by plotting hourly humidity and temperature changes over the course of a year. This data is then reduced and charted. It is possible for the various temperature needs to be read directly for any time of the year.

The chart clearly shows the extremes of heat during the summer, times when outdoor shading and wind-oriented breezeways are necessary for comfort. It also shows the extremes of heating needed during the coldest months, when the importance of utilizing all possible insolation is clear.

Legend

◻ 100

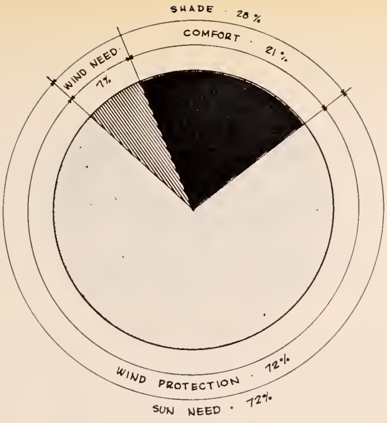
Radiation Deficiency Hours. (BTU's/sq. ft./hr. needed to raise temperature to comfort level.)

🟥

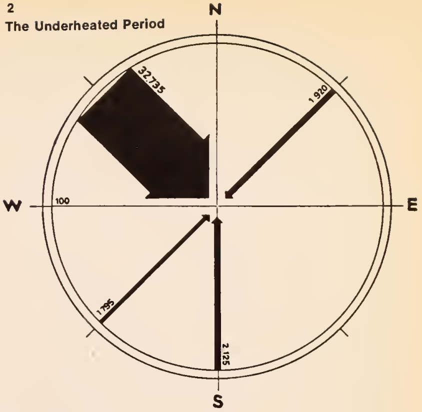
Radiation Surplus Hours. (Shade needed for comfort.)

🟦

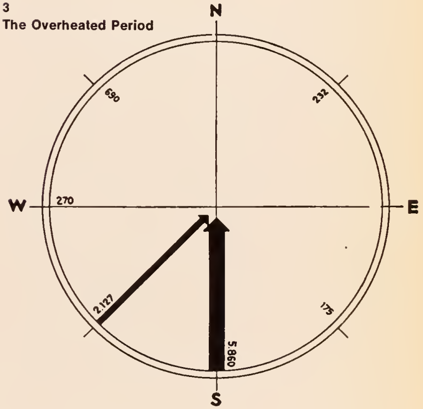
Radiation Surplus Hours. (Shade and air movement to 30 ft. min. needed for comfort.)



2
The Underheated Period



3
The Overheated Period



1
Bioclimatic Needs as Percent of Total Yearly Hours

In New York, 72% of the year is seen to be underheated, while 28% is overheated. Only 7% of the time needs both shading and air movement. This chart emphasizes the need for wind protection most of the year for sedentary outdoor activities.

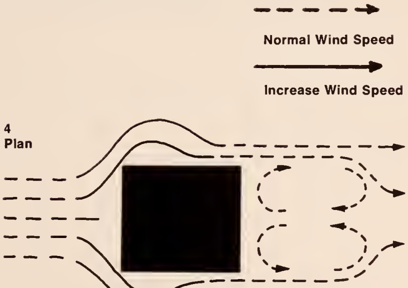
2 and 3
New York Wind Velocity and Direction.

The numbers represent the total amount of 4-hourly data x the ft. min. air movement velocity throughout the year at average conditions. When wind velocities during the cool and warm parts of the year are charted as proportional vectors it is clearly shown that the prevailing cool winds come at an angle of from 90° to 135° from the prevailing summer winds.

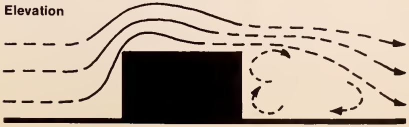
4 and 5
Typical Air Flow Diagrams Around a Windbreak

The optimal normal orientation of many open space features — the windbreaks, windscreens, shelter walls, shade trees and hedges, breezeways and sheltered nooks — all becomes clear. When used with insolation studies it is possible to take full advantage of local climatic factors in orientation and even in planning a structure as well as laying out the associated open spaces to minimize climatic unsuitability.

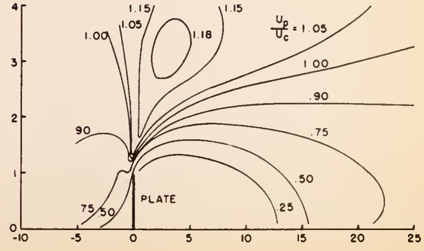
4
Plan



Elevation



5
Both the horizontal and vertical distances are multiples of the wall height.



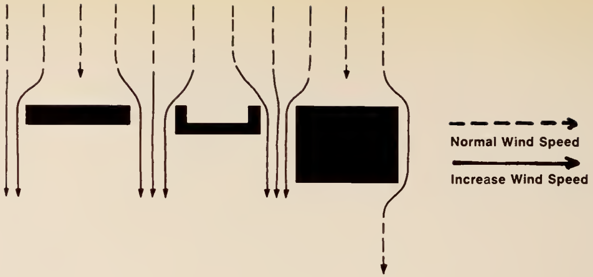
Some Aspects of New York Microclimates.

1. At the ends of a wall or corners of a structure, wind speed will increase by as much as 20%. At openings within the obstruction this speed will increase even more, in the so-called "funnel effect." Winds striking the obstruction within a direction of 45° of perpendicular do not produce any significant change in the shelter effect. Turbulence will also increase around the limits of any wind obstruction.

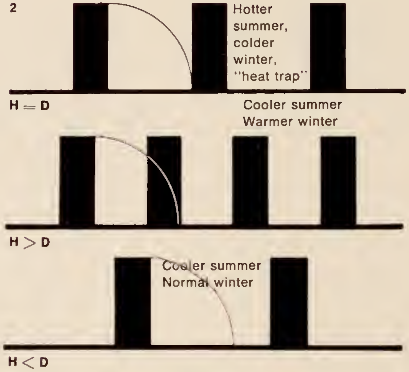
2. The general relationship between the height of a structure and the distance on to the next structure affects local temperature as diagrammed (on occasion local conditions will be determining enough to nullify these basic rules). A compact series of buildings with narrow open spaces, interspersed with wider open spaces is a good arrangement for New York for the creation of a more comfortable microclimate. However, the actual size and arrangement of open spaces, as well as their planting patterns, should vary with the individual site.

3. The basic New York residential pattern of open space, with its wide avenues, narrow cross streets, and enclosed rear areas within each block, is poorly oriented for best climatic results. Especially during the winter season, the east-west streets act as channels for the northwest storm winds. During the summer, on the other hand, the wide unshaded north-south avenues tend to intensify overheating effects by re-radiation, while some of the narrow cross streets may act as heat traps, as do some of the backyard areas. However, in spite of these drawbacks the system works fairly well, since during the winter storms the compact grain of the residential blocks provides protection to the individual units from both excessive winds and extreme radiation problems. During the overheated periods, on the other hand, many of the side streets and backyard areas are cooler and more comfortable than normal, while wherever the north-south avenues are tree lined the cooling effect of the summer breezes is increased. This may be in part due to the funnel effect diagrammed above, since it has been shown that this effect also takes place where a row of trees parallels a building or another row of trees.

1



2

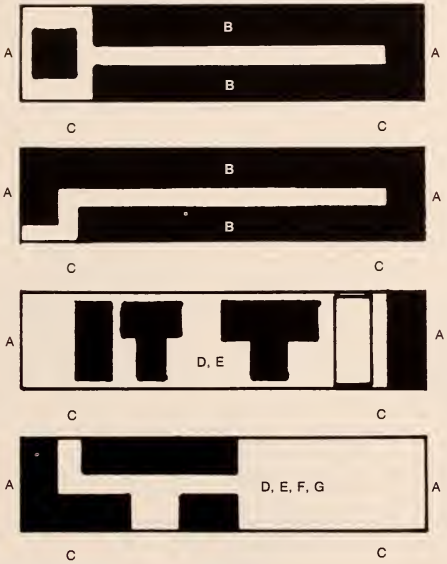


1
Wind Flow Around Obstructions Showing Funnel Effect

2
Height-Distance Relationship

Basic improvements in air circulation and insolation for increased comfort could still be made, not only in redeveloped areas, but also in the entire city, in spite of the rigidity imposed by the fixed street pattern. At the same time, it is important to avoid the perpetuation of old mistakes during reconstruction.

1



1

A
Tree plantings should be encouraged, especially along the N-S summer breeze lines, but also in overheated spaces in general, in order to break up radiation before it reaches the ground level.

B
Solid blocks of residences with interior courts might be opened up along N-S lines at mid-block in order to intensify summer cooling and relieve overheating in heat trap areas.

C
Tree plantings leading to a substantial degree of wind control during the winter storms are possible along the E-W streets.

D
During the rebuilding of an area, the random accumulation of sructures with large undifferentiated open spaces needs careful handling both in plantings and shelters or windbreaks to avoid the undesirable climatic effects of bare open spaces.

E
Large open areas are aided by being in the lee of structures in the winter and by efficient shading and breeze circulation in the summer.

F
Where temporary open spaces exist, temporary artificial shade is often feasible, while effective windbreaks are also easily made of portable materials.

G
Large open spaces have unpleasant climatic side effects. Wind speed increases during storms, while during the hotter part of the year ground temperature may be as much as 25°F higher than in the adjacent shade. At the same time humidity may become uncomfortably low.

4. The simple reorientation of a structure from north-south to southwest-northeast, along with some modification of adjacent open space may add to the natural heating in winter by thousands of BTU's as well as being much cooler in summer, becoming comfortable most of the year with a minimum of artificial heating or cooling. Where planting or walls are impractical for shading or windbreak, removable external shades can be very useful to block or admit insolation at different times of the year.

It should be emphasized again that the general rules used above have been applied to idealized situations and would have to be used in actual practice in response to the specific configuration of the open spaces and associated structures. However, there are few structures anywhere whose environment could not be improved by the practical application of some of the principles of microclimatology. Often a significant improvement in the comfort of a site may be achieved by only minor physical modifications.

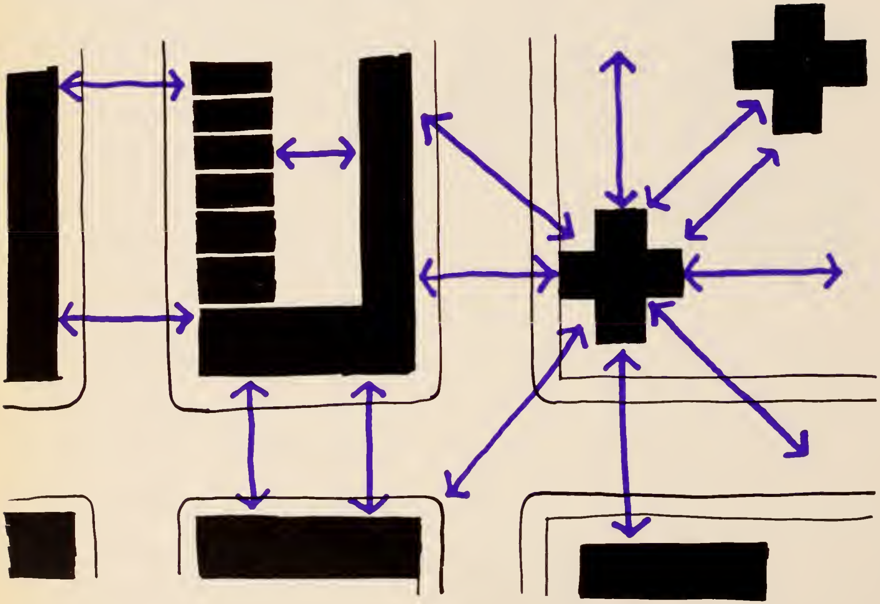
There is no general set of rules which can be used to modify an individual site without field work. Microclimatology is, by definition, a study of small areas, all of which have their own peculiarities, and many special techniques of observation have been devised. These observations are usually taken close to the surface and record differences within much smaller ranges and distances than do normal observations. Special studies are essential background to any knowledgeable attempt to modify a local environment, since normal climatic data are designed to minimize the recording of the very differences which are the core of microclimatic studies. This is why, in actual practice, the open spaces of each site require careful study prior to action.

In the New York area, with a fairly uncomfortable natural climate already aggravated by man, liveability may be greatly enhanced by the observance of sound climatic practices. The effect of high rise buildings, alone or mixed with lower elements, or the effect of various changes in design may often be quickly studied by means of a wind tunnel. There is a large literature on the effect of winds on tall buildings in Japan and Hong Kong, while a local monograph describes the effect of winds on the Empire State Building.

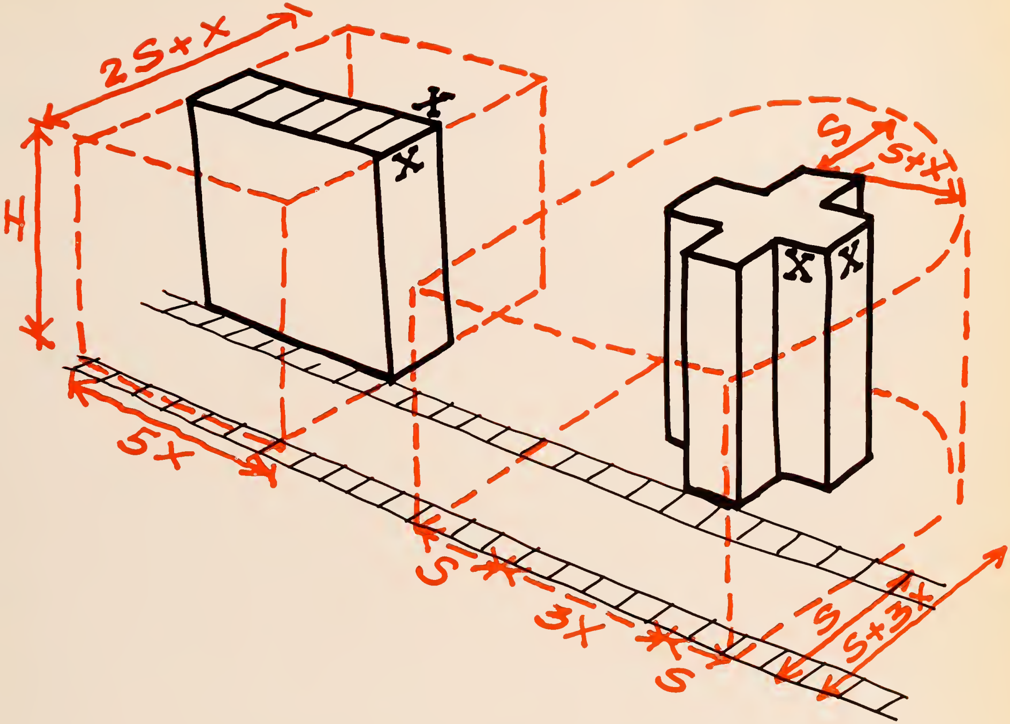
The Influence of Zoning on Open Space

The effect of zoning on architectural design in New York City has been commented on at length for many years. The ziggurat form of the sky scraper, particularly in downtown areas, has been a specific result of the previous zoning laws. The new zoning ordinance has effected a proliferation of tall towers in plazas.

What is not so commonly understood is the effect zoning has had on site planning and therefore on the city's open spaces. In actuality zoning has been so restrictive and preconceived as to allow for little creative thinking in the development of integrated 3-dimensionally conceived site plans nor has it been possible to deal with social issues as well.

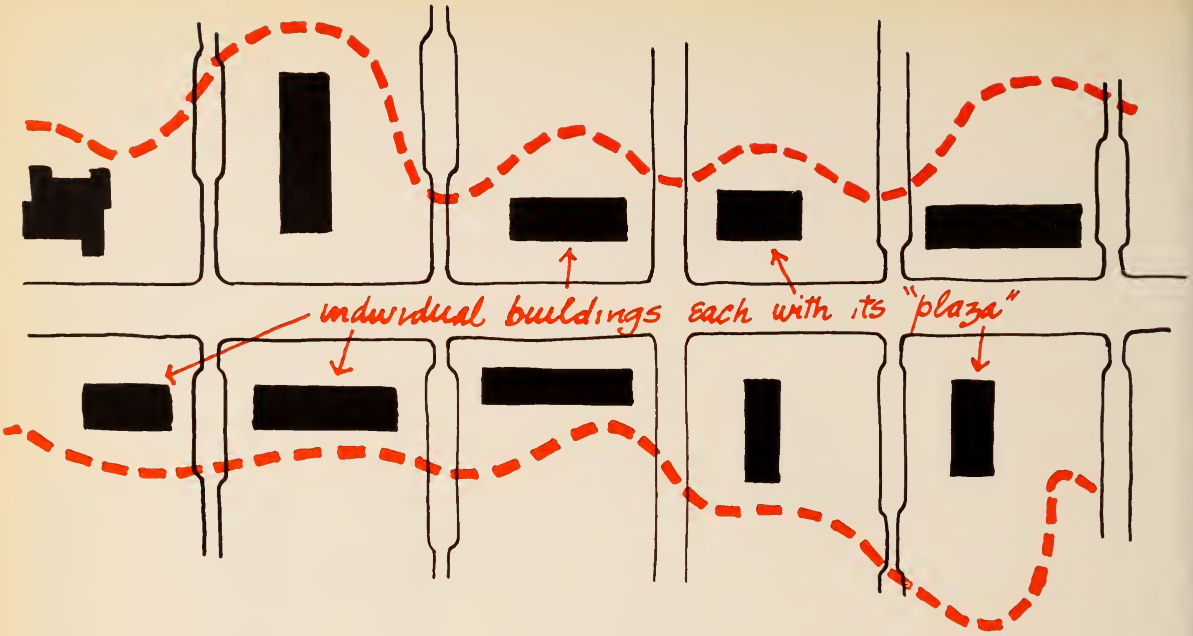


Urban building forms have enormous effects on the open space around them. They not only sit in space but they enclose space. The existing pattern of New York row houses faced down on streets and related to each other in a linear way, a clear, and defined pattern. The new tower forms have a completely different effect.



Analysis of the Open Space (Volume) Requirements Linear Form as Compared to Cruciform

The colored lines represent the approximate volumes required by each form to function in relation to its own space and adjacent buildings. To apply the formula use S = 100, H = 100, X = 5. Then the area for the linear equals 62,500 square feet and the area for the cruciform equals 103,200 square feet.



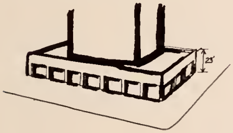
1. Open Space Ratio: $\text{OSR} = 100 \times \frac{\text{open space}}{\text{Floor area}}$

This applies only to buildings containing residential uses. In effect this provision dictates that each building must provide its own open space **on its own property.** Even though the large scale provision of the ordinance does permit special arrangements, the Manhattan street structure and the desire and need to retain existing structures sharply limit its use and flexibility. The immediate implied result is to surround each building with space, making it impossible to pool spaces either horizontally or vertically. The result is suburban. Under this provision the public development of open space as a pooled resource in joint use is nearly impossible.

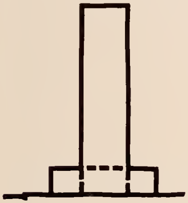
The tower restrictions and open space requirements tend to influence the building forms in such a way as to disrupt continuity—since the low elements are **too** low to be visually effective, the full burden of defining street form falls on the towers. However, they are too diversely designed and too widely spaced to create either a wall or a series of related rhythmic elements. These effects of the zoning ordinance in practice were either not known or anticipated by those who wrote and approved it. The consequences: Columbus Avenue in the West Side Renewal Area will remain a disorderly disruption of the urban form for 40-50 years. To effect continuity and the multi-dimensional system we (and others) feel is necessary, this provision should be modified.

When multiplied parcel by parcel over broad areas and particularly along avenues, the "bonus provisions" for plazas and the open space regulations gradually destroy the visual order of the city.

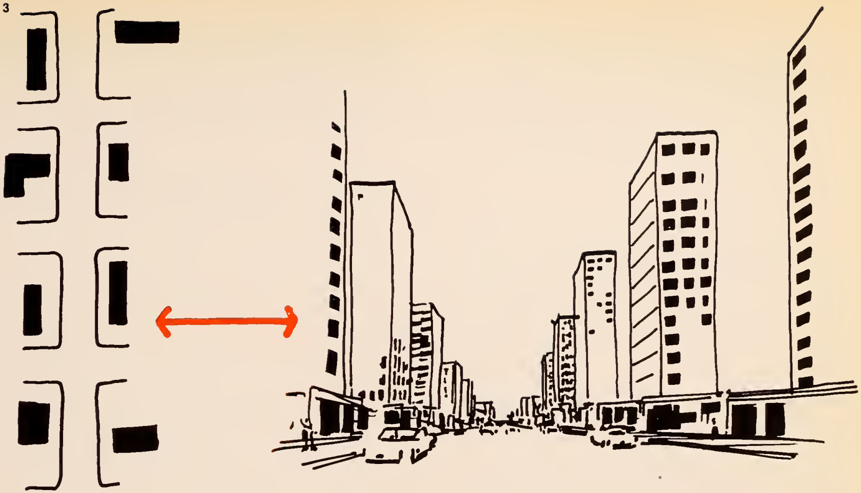
1
The floor area ratio of the zoning ordinance counts 23′ high low elements with "useable" open space on roofs as "open space." The tower forms on 23′ high platforms result from this provision and produce too low an element along avenues to contain the space.



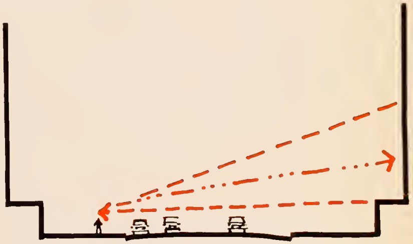
2
The new "zoning building"



3
Typical New Development along an Avenue (this can be Columbus or 3rd since the El has been removed). The tower restrictions and open space requirements of the zoning ordinance influence building forms in such a way as to disrupt continuity. Since the low elements are too low to be visually effective the full burden of street form falls on the towers —however they are too diversely designed and too widely spaced to create either a facade or a series of rhythmically related elements.



4
On wide avenues, such as Columbus, the building configuration produces views like this. The low 23′ high element is too low to effect a quality of "facade."



2. Floor Area Ratio.

The distinction between coverage and open space essentially establishes a form for the building with a 23′ high plinth. Land coverage restrictions, which do not count for one or two story commercial and garage spaces, are producing a new building form. This form is obviously the outgrowth of economic exploitation to the full within the zoning ordinance.

The renewal plan allows "usable" open space on roofs of low elements such as commercial and garage spaces to fulfill requirements. This means in practice that it is more profitable for the developer to build low, one or two story, nonresidential elements and take advantage of this accepted use. In use, these roof areas are vacant, generally inaccessible and, because of the 23′ height limit, the stores have limited possibilities.

The form which comes naturally out of the zoning ordinance is difficult if not impossible to deal with aesthetically. It is true that an architect does not **have** to develop his design this way, but there are great pressures working toward the use of this form. Alternatively, a system using 4-5 stories as the low elements from which towers could rise would work visually and function better (see our multidimensional system).

On wide avenues such as Columbus the building configuration is such that the eye, when looking across the street from one sidewalk to another, falls on the first floor of the tower portion just above the low element. Therefore, we miss the special presentation which the store wishes to make and see instead a portion of the building which we were never intended to see. It is usually unarticulated and uninteresting.

3. Bonus provisions

This provision relates directly to the open space ratio and is an extension of it. It states that the less ground covered by a building the higher it can go—actually a greater amount of floor area then becomes possible. Bonuses are additionally made for plazas and other open space.

The result of this provision of the ordinance is obviously encouragement of the simple concept of tall towers standing in their own ground plane of open space.

It is such a seductive image that most buildings are now designed this way in New York.

When multiplied parcel by parcel over broad areas and along avenues the bonus system for plazas and the open space regulations will gradually begin to destroy the visual order of the city (not so gradually in the case of renewal areas). The zoning ordinance is proliferating a design concept which may work in one place but certainly does not work everywhere. The spaces being created are gradually producing an uncontrolled, amorphous urban form.

4. Setback Regulations

These regulate dimensions of side yards, minima from rear yard lines, as well as setbacks from property lines, etc. Although their purpose is to protect from encroachment on light and air they effectively force wider visual street effects than are desirable, since the open space contained within street lines totals roadway, sidewalks, and setbacks. The impact of this again is to suburbanize housing in New York, and to establish spaces along sidewalks and between buildings which are rarely usable, often create maintenance problems and are usually windswept and ugly.

5. Design Controls

Robert Alpern has made what we believe are significant recommendations for the improvement of zoning regulations, and which all point to a flexibility and attitude towards urban design implications which we feel will greatly enhance the renewal process in New York.

In the New York City Zoning Ordinance there are three general types of design regulation:

Basic Controls, including the Open Space Ratio, the height and setback regulations, court and yard requirements, minimum spacing requirements, and sign regulations.

Incentive provisions, operating either "as of right," as in the floor area bonus for plazas, arcades and plaza-connected open areas; at the discretion of the Planning Commission, as in the Planned Unit Development bonus for Good Site Design; or by special permission of the Planning Commission subject to Board of Estimate veto, as in the Planned Unit Development bonus for Open Space and the special permit providing increased floor area in the newly-designated Special Theater District; and Authorizations, discretionary approvals by the Planning Commission, permitting flexible massing in Large Scale Developments.

In addition, the Special Permit and Variance provisions have both been used to promote good design. Variances under a provision requiring that the variance will not "alter the essential character of the neighborhood or district" or "substantially impair the appropriate use or development of adjacent property"; special permits under a variety of provisions, from minimum ("appropriate conditions" to "minimize adverse effects" on the "character of the surrounding area") to elaborate ("that the architectural and landscaping treatment of such use will blend harmoniously with the rest of the area").

In short, the Zoning Ordinance is relatively passive as a design instrument. Discretionary action cannot intervene to promote good design until a spacial favor is asked, and even then the approach is generally timid. The Plaza and Arcade bonuses are automatic, with no opportunity for administrative intervention at all. The Variance provisions and the Special Permit provisions, by and large, are not very explicit. Only the Planned Unit Development and Special Theater District regulations boldly call for administration intervention in the interests of good design.

Once upon a time, the courts were reluctant to *accept aesthetics as a legitimate police power purpose. That day is, for the most part, past. In New York State, moreover, the drift of court decision has been reinforced by legislative enactment of the so-called Bard Law. Legally, therefore, a bold expansion of discretionary control is possible.*

In all areas of the City of special design significance—areas of aesthetic, historic or ecological importance—all buildings can be subject to design review. (Such regulation might affect buildings facing parks and waterfronts, or commanding heights, along major transportation routes, at major intersections.)

Bonuses everywhere could be allowed only after administrative review; and Special Permits and Variances and Large Scale Development authorizations could be made, subject to explicit design criteria.

I. Use

a. Enlargement of the scope of Special Permits generally, and the substitution of Special Permits for Performance Standards as a control for manufacturing use.

b. For non-conforming uses, expansion of the coverage of the "termination" subject to administrative review and the payment of compensation.

c. For uses deemed specially desirable in certain areas, the mapping of **Special Use Districts,** *and the offer of direct subsidy to owners willing to locate such favored uses in them.*

II. Density

a. Tightening of density levels where more construction will overload available services.

b. Careful control over the granting of floor area bonuses, to ensure compliance with reasonable density levels.

c. More sensitive procedures for loosening density controls, preferably through issuance of Special Permits in areas mapped as **Special Density Districts** *(areas designated for service improvement).*

III. Design

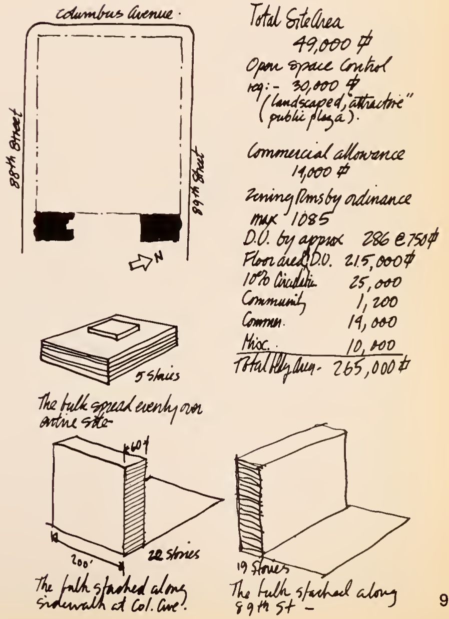
a. Administrative review of all building plans in areas mapped as **Special Design Districts** *(areas of special design significance).*

b. Administrative review of all bonuses, including the bonuses for plazas, arcades, and plaza-connected open areas.

c. Explicit design criteria for the grant of Special Permits, Variances and Large Scale Developments.

d. In our view some discretionary use of the zoning ordinance is mandatory to achieve the complex and intricate problems inherent in developing "instant communities."

Excerpts from *Position Paper on Zoning & Urban Design*



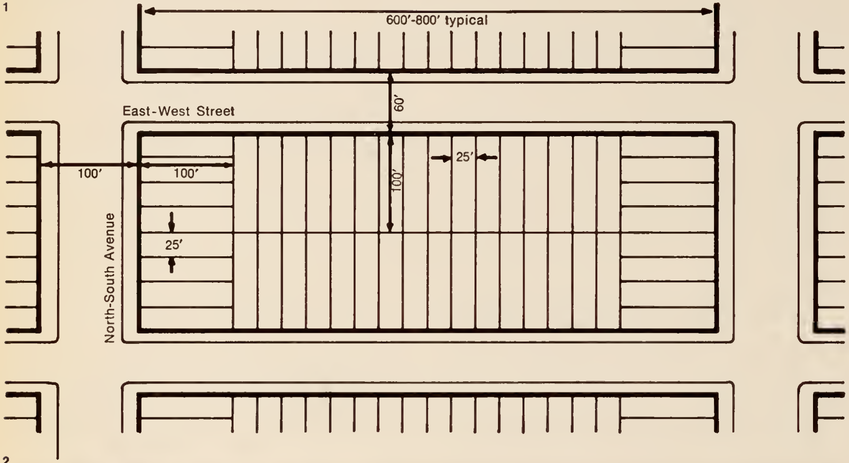
Analysis of bulk ratios and land coverage.

Density

In our studies of the open spaces of New York's housing we have been led to evaluate the existing buildings, the way they are arranged on their lots, and the open spaces which result from this placement.

The diagram indicates the typical block pattern for New York. North-south avenues are 100 feet wide. East-west streets are 60 feet wide. Properties are 25 by 100, although considerable numbers of brownstones were built on 15, 17, 18 and 20 foot lots. Block lengths are typically 600 feet long, though in some portions of the old East Village they are smaller, i.e., 400 feet long.

1



2

1
Typical New York block pattern.

2
The early row houses at the edge of the city occupied ½ of the depth of the lot—Lenox and 133rd Street.

The usual house, then, on a 25 by 100 foot lot occupied the entire width of the property and (at the begining) one-half of its depth or 50%. This was a single family house built before 1850, very typical of many of the early colonial row houses (see also Georgetown, Philadelphia, etc.) whose light and air penetrated all rooms from the street and the rear yard and all rooms had outside contact.

"During the decade and a half between 1840 and 1855, coincident with the introduction of steam navigation, the population of New York almost doubled. During this period single family houses were converted to multiple family occupancy resulting in two families occupying each floor. Toilet facilities consisted of privies in the yard. For many years, even after the introduction of city water, the entire plumbing system in the average converted dwelling consisted of a sink supplied with cold water in the stair hall on the ground floor." [Ford] This was the origin of the infamous term "cold water flats."

As the population grew housing increased by either adding to the back of the house or building new tenements . Whichever the course of action, what emerged were solid blocks of buildings covering as much as 90% of the land, with many families on each floor. There was light and air still only front and back which penetrated only a small percent of the rooms. Densities rose. Squalor increased. The slums were inevitable. From the original density of 68-70 persons per acre, densities climbed until in the 80's they reached magnitudes of 1100-1200 persons per acre. This was, at the time, **the highest density of any city in the world!**

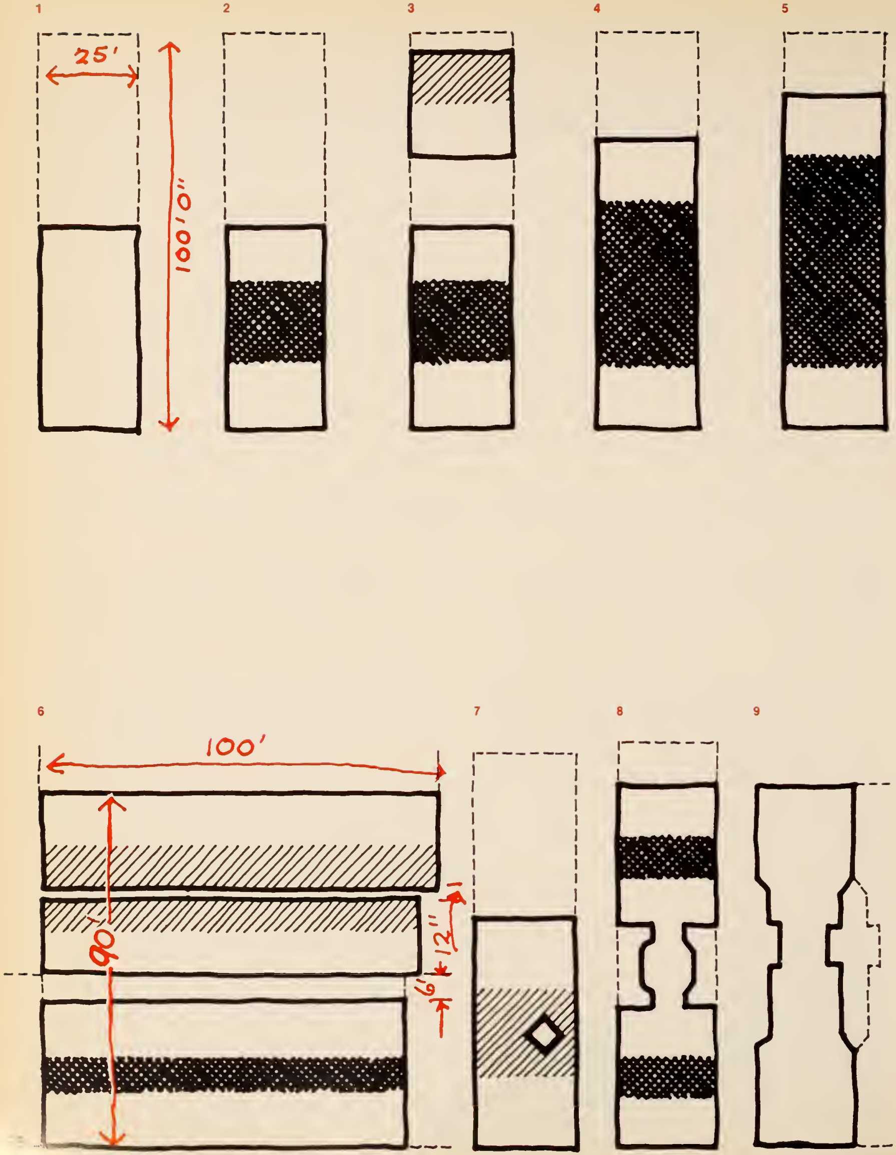
James Ford has written a superb review of the entire history of the slums and housing in New York which documents the era and we do not, therefore, need to document its entirety. But the background of all housing and renewal in the city, since that time, rests on the inevitable need to deal with housing conditions of incredible inadequacy. At densities of 1100 persons per acre, with outside plumbing, and no light and air, and 90% land coverage, health suffered, disease was difficult to control, and social implications were searing. From the point of view of the major thrust of this report open space was street and avenue. Nothing else. The life of the city spilled out into these. They became the living rooms, the playgrounds, and the social space of the slums. Laundry was hung up from house to house. Games were played on street and alley. Bedding was aired on the fire escapes.

A review of housing types showing land coverage, light and air, open spaces, and densities follows. We have used the convention of persons per gross acre as a basis for density figures since this in actuality approximates reality. Dwelling units per acre (the more usual American technique) does not really indicate density. We have had to make extrapolations in our conversions and, at the four persons per average family figure we have used, it is likely that (especially during the heavy waves of immigration) our figures are, in fact, too low. Methods of density computation, of course, vary. No one system seems to work. Dwelling units per gross acre leaves no indication of real occupancy. Even our recommended technique of persons per acre is not as meaningful as it should be unless applied to large areas as averages because it does not indicate open space in the public domain. It is quite clear, for example, that densities along Central Park could be higher than they could be in a continuously built up area. No one system adequately describes the real situation. And yet persons per acre has been, for us, the best way to show comparisons.

The question of density has many side effects and raises innumerable questions which are extremely germane to this report. Ford points out that there is a real question as to whether high density per se is socially undesirable. Our own conclusion is that it is not! He even goes on to say that "Bad housing in itself does not (even) produce criminality, immorality, intemperance, or other vices. All behavior is a resultant of the interaction of personality, which is intricate and complex, with environment, which is equally complex."

In addition there are ethnic and social controls which have a great deal of influence on the question of density. Fishberg in the **Menorah** of 1902 wrote: ". . . on careful analysis it was discovered that the wards which enjoy the lowest mortality of the other wards in New York are the **most densely populated** in the city overcrowded with tenements, each of which affords a dwelling for between 200 and 400 human beings. The wards showing the lowest mortality . . . are those inhabited by Russian Jews. . . . This is due to their past history, religious customs and habits of life . . ." This is not meant to be a defense of slum conditions or unhealthy crowding or the customs of the Jews. It does indicate that many factors other than high density "are operating in the environment."

New York Housing Types 1800-1901



1
One family D. U.
Pre-1850
50% Coverage
144 P. P. A.

2
One family D. U.
Converted to Tenement
Pre-1850
50% Coverage
288 P. P. A.

3
Addition of Rear Tenement
C. 1850
77% Coverage
720 P. P. A.

4
Railroad Type Tenement
After 1850
75% Coverage
1150 P. P. A.

5
Railroad Type Tenement
Extreme Example
After 1850
85% Coverage
1150 P. P. A.

6
Typical Overcrowding on Lot
C. 1860
1900 P. P. A.

7
Model Tenement
Prior to 1864
60% Coverage
576 P. P. A.

8
"Dumbbell" or "Doubledecker" Tenement
C. 1879
77% Coverage
1150 P. P. A.

9
Prevalent Old Law Tenement Type
Based on "Dumbbell" 1887
87% Coverage
1150 P. P. A.

10

Attempted Improvements for Light and Air in Old Law Tenement

1879
60% Coverage
1150 P.P.A.

1880-1887
67% Coverage
1150 P.P.A.

1880-1887
88% Coverage
576 P.P.A.

1880-1887
80% Coverage
865 P.P.A.

1880-1887
67% Coverage
865 P.P.A.

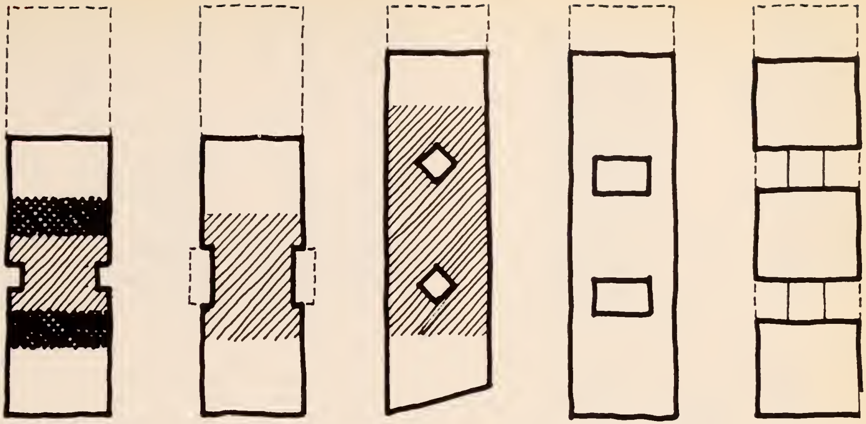
11

Tenement on a 100′ Lot
1894
68% Coverage
865 P.P.A.

12

New Law Tenement—6 Stories
1901
75% Coverage
1150 P.P.A.

10



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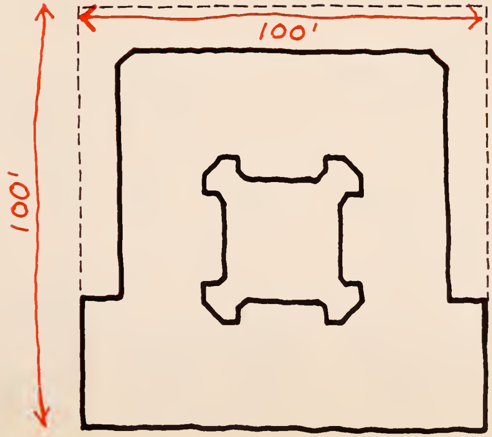

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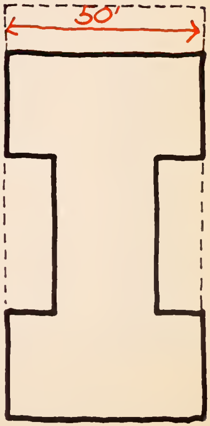


Legend:

⬚ Lot Area

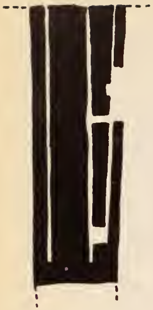
☐ Building Area

■ Rooms without Light and Air

▨ Rooms with Indirect Light and Air

Housing Site Plans 1850-1959

1



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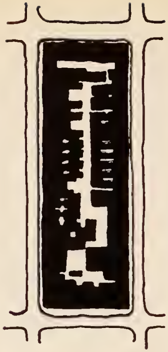

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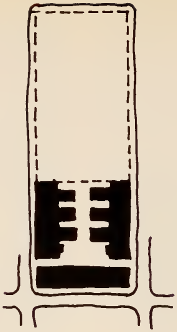

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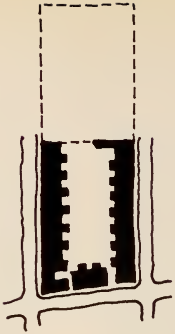

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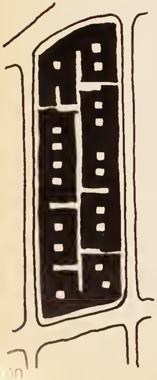

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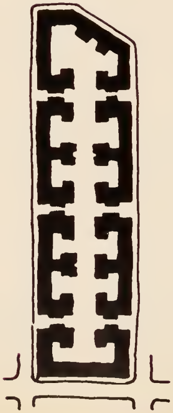

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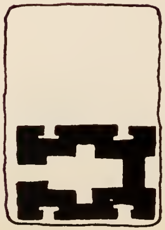

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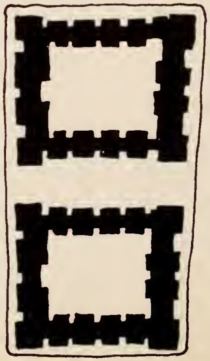


1
Tenement Block
1850
80% Coverage
600 P.P.A.

2
Old Law Tenement
1840-1900
74% Coverage
600 P.P.A.

3
Forerunner of Model Tenement
1879-1881
60% Coverage
700 P.P.A.

4
Model Development—Riverside
1890
50% Coverage
700 P.P.A.

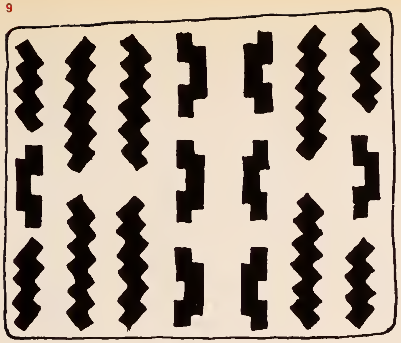
5
Typical New Law Block
After 1900
77% Coverage
400 P.P.A.

6
Dunbar Apartments—Harlem
(private low-income)
50% Coverage
680 P.P.A.

7
Amalgamated Dwellings
1930
50% Coverage
390 P.P.A.

8
Knickerbocker Village
(13 stories)
1933
46% Coverage
750 P.P.A.

9



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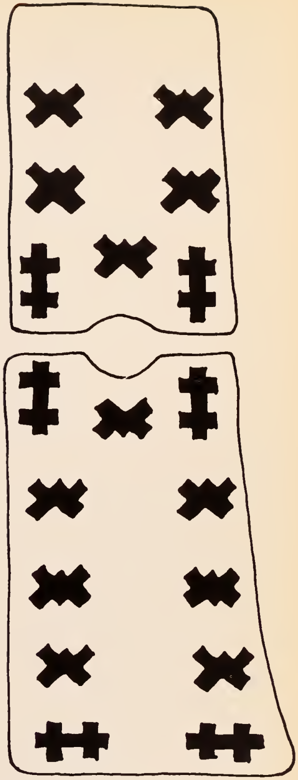

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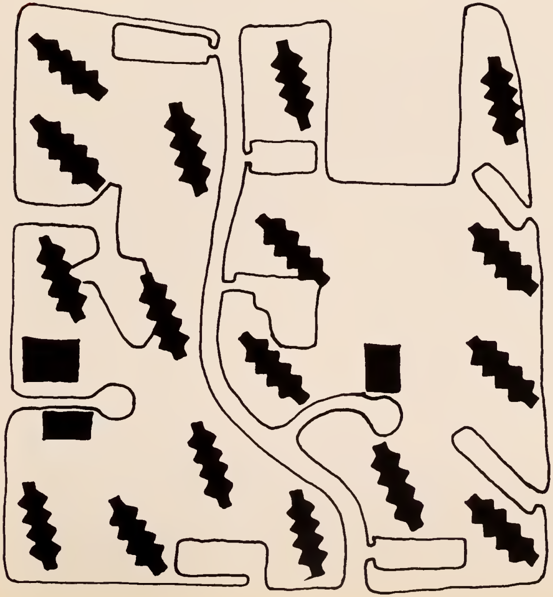
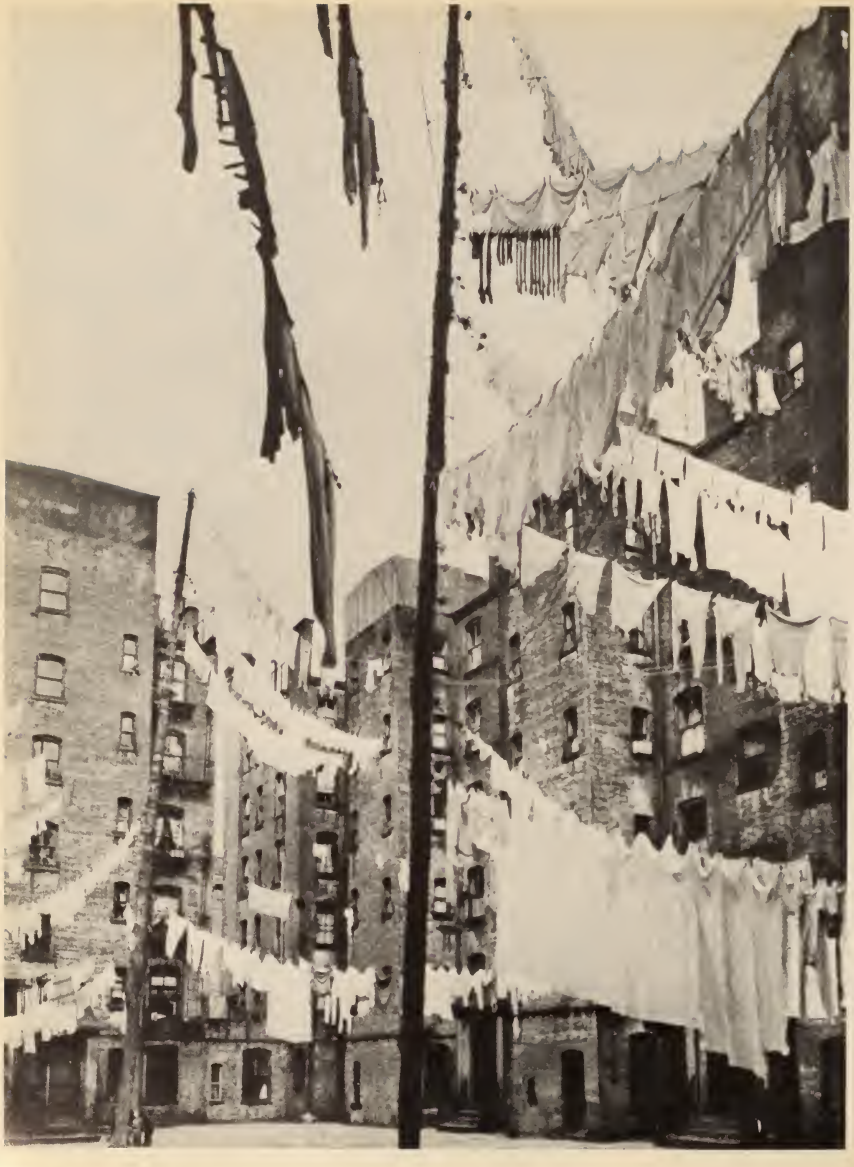


9
Vladeck
1940
50% Coverage
550 P.P.A.

10
Jacob Riis
1949
20% Coverage
340 P.P.A.

11
Baruch
1959
16% Coverage
288 P.P.A.



Central Court of the "Model Tenement."

In our search for density figures which also allow for as many environmental amenities as people seem to want, we have also weighed the benefits of crowding on social interaction. The suburbs with their typical densities of 4-6 families per acre yielding about 25 persons per acre have increasingly seemed less than Nirvana to their inhabitants.

Acceptable density criteria have been studied more in Europe than in America. Most rebuilding in outlying districts of London aims at 136 persons per acre while in the center they reach 220 persons per acre [Crosby]. New York has been aiming at rehousing people at approximately 300 persons per acre. Old Law tenements gave densities (as we have shown) of over 1000 per acre with land coverage of 85 or 90%. Knickerbocker Village with a land coverage of 50% has a density of 600.

The issue we believe is less one of density than of land coverage, less of land coverage than of what facilities are provided in open space.

The allowable density averages under different residence districts, as interpreted from the **present** New York zoning ordinances, are as follows:

District	D.U. Per Acre	P.P.A. (gross) at 4 per D.U.
R-5	60	240
R-6	110	440
R-7	145	580
R-8	235	940
R-9	265	1060

With a new approach to 3-dimensional land use and vertical as well as horizontal development of open spaces (and recreational facilities) density figures can be revised. Certainly 500-600 persons per acre is acceptable with the new technologies and new methods of achieving amenity. At these densities more amenities can be achieved, separation of traffic and pedestrians becomes economically sound, commercial facilities in large numbers can be provided. Examples exist: the Golden Gateway in San Francisco is a middle income redevelopment project. Though it has been designed for smaller families, without much modification, the design applies. Facilities are for 125 dwelling units per acre including a mixture of towers and town houses, private courts, a neighborhood park and parking under cover. At an extrapolation of 4 persons per family this would equal 500+ persons per acre.

Encounter Group

The encounter group is a new technique for evolving people's real programmatic needs and desires [Baum]. This system has been used in hospital work, in industry, in schools, and is applicable where management and (staff or) residents are not the same people. It enables important interactions to occur which disclose unimagined or deeply submerged responses.

The vast and traumatic shock of change can be overcome if people feel that the change is self-generated, not imposed. The problem is two-fold. First is to find out what people really want. Secondarily, the focus should include involvement in the process of change.

The usual techniques for finding out what people really want has been through questionnaires. This has limited value in social systems involving environment. Questionnaires are useful mostly when what is being described is an objective or linear system. When questionnaires attempt to grapple with intricacies involving multiplicity of choice which affect people's lives in a profound way they tend to be ineffectual.

Human needs do not really come into focus until they are **not** being met [Baum]. Thus they are difficult to evaluate and program at the inception of a project.

The encounter group technique should be used in New York to disclose two things: (1) what is wrong with an existing environment, and (2) how to pre-program an environment **before** it is built. It is as part of an encounter group that the designer may, in fact, find his most significant future role in a vital and moving relationship on a programmatic level with the people for whom he is, in fact, designing. (See appendix for details on how encounter groups can be established.)

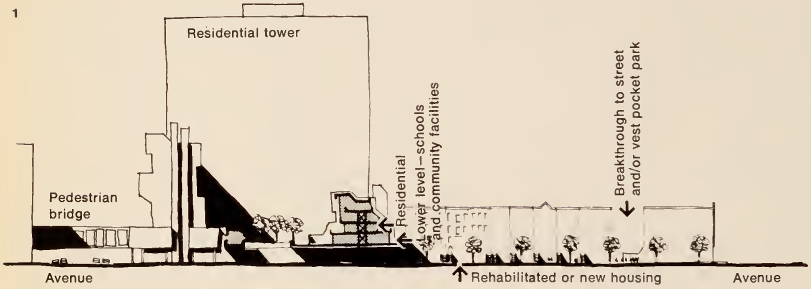
The most important result of the encounter group will be in a deeper understanding of the roles people have to play in the process of change. In other times people built their environment slowly by a process of accretion. Now we have to build suddenly and in larger and ever-larger increments. Group dynamics can, we feel, re-establish the quality of self determination which is so important to people in the establishment of where and how they live.

A Multi-Dimensional Urban System

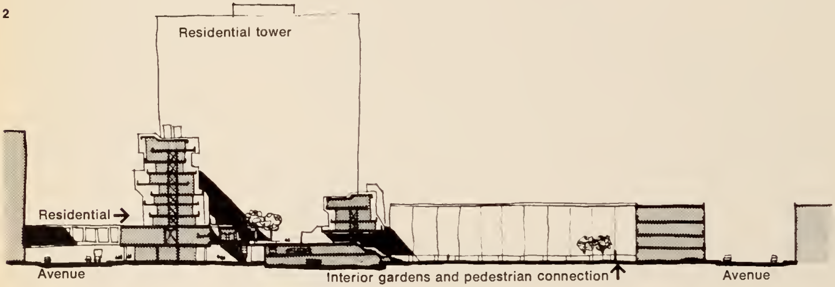
The vertical expansion of the open space system can be achieved by planning and building large complexes as multi-dimensional systems. Present zoning laws prohibit this but they should be changed. Now that we have the technology for achieving amenity in large scale structures and in vertical developments, nothing stands in our way but legal and administrative procedures.

A new structuring device for the city, particularly applicable to Manhattan, must be devised which can incorporate old row houses into the developing new systems. The new system can emerge when large parcels are planned and built together and designed to provide all facilities together **within** the system—street, house, commercial facilities, community areas, open space, and transportation. The new system must emphasize the rehabilitation of all existing structures which are structurally salvageable.

1


Residential tower
Pedestrian bridge
Residential
Lower level—schools and community facilities
Breakthrough to street and/or vest pocket park
Avenue
Rehabilitated or new housing
Avenue

2



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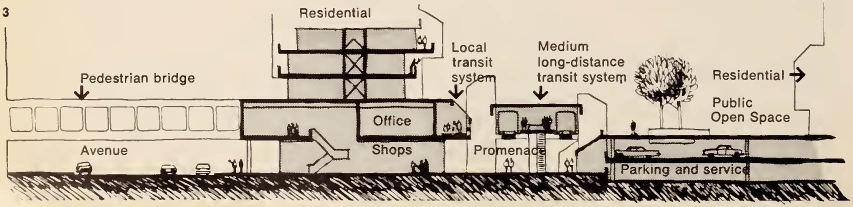
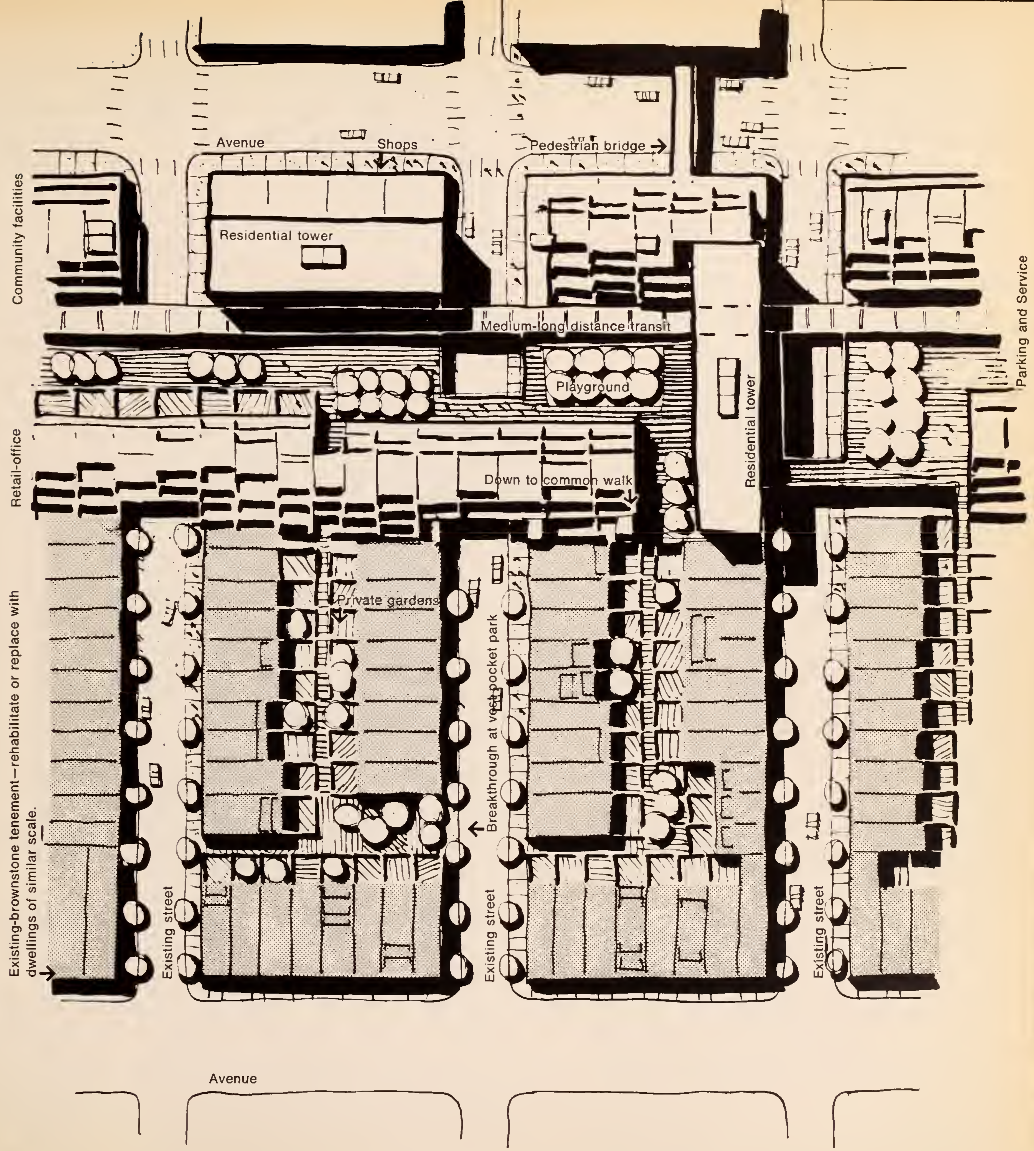


1
Typical center line of street section

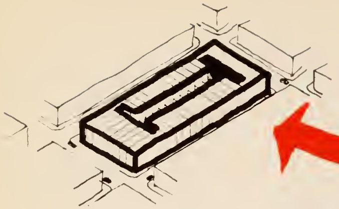
2
Typical mid-block section

3
Section of Schematic Transit Systems

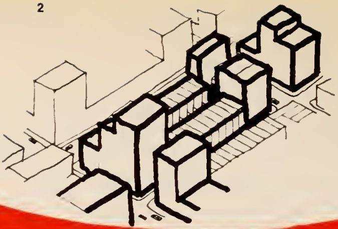


Multi-Dimensional System Linear Avenue Development

1



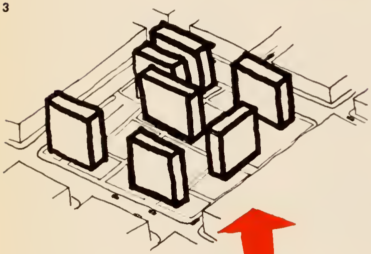
2



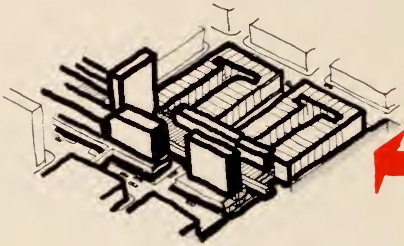
2- Towers creep in on the avenues some of the brown stones remain.

1 The typical row of brownstones before change begins.

3



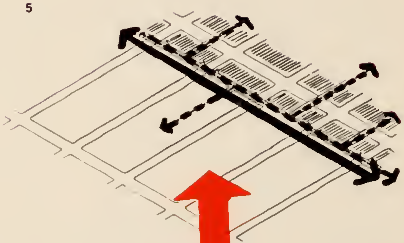
4



4. The proposed system - linkage along the avenues - spanning the streets - the small scale can remain on the streets

3- Clearance and then reconstruction with a series of slabs rising from undifferentiated open space

5



A series of diagrams showing the typical progression of events in New York.

5- The movement system evolved from the above - N-S transit down the avenues through the linkages - E-W on bridges xcross the avenues.

1
Typical Brownstone Tenement Block

2
Typical Modified Block. Scattered development of highrise buildings along avenues—no linkage.

3
Typical Superblock Housing Development. Slabs or towers in undifferentiated open space.

4
Proposed Multi-Dimensional System Integrated into Existing City along Avenue. Towers rise from basic 4-5 level linking structure which contains services, pedestrian spaces, transportation, shops, open spaces. Rehabilitated buildings or new 4-6 story residences remain along streets.

5
Schematic Transit Systems

What we propose is not high rise buildings within an open space system as is now done but an open space system as part of integrated building complexes. The scale of the city can then be recaptured. Properly done, new structures can incorporate older buildings into their fabric.

The system must be flexible and, of course, economic. It can be designed to incorporate parking for service vehicles, internally oriented pedestrian circulation separated from transport, in addition to housing.

Transportation in Manhattan has almost come to a standstill. In many parts of the city it is easier and quicker to walk than to take a taxi—certainly easier than to take a car. Parking is inadequate and clogs the streets; busses are overloaded; the subway is congested and depressing; service trucks and vans jam the streets. In short, the system is not functioning. The problems of moving people around the city, though not really the responsibility of this report, does nonetheless affect the use and quality of open space. The environment, which **is** our province, suffers badly.

Starting from the automobile (as perhaps we must), we do not recommend any at-grade parking lots within renewal projects. The land is too valuable for other uses and the impact on the environment is too debilitating. For this reason we have suggested covering the vast parking lots at Penn Station South and using the tops for play areas.

But our attitude goes further. **We believe that the car in Manhattan is doomed as a transportation mechanism.** Other devices must take its place. There is no way for the car to continue to serve (with increasing densification) the needs of the people in Manhattan. Air pollution, noise pollution, and space pollution will increase unless something is done at once. We recommend abolishing the use and storage of private vehicles within the city.

For that reason we have recommended careful attention to new people-moving devices within our multi-dimensional urban system. These systems can be of differing orders of speed depending on distance to be covered. They would occur as shown in the section at the second level. Moving sidewalks, minirails, and higher speed transit would, through systems, allow people to move throughout the whole city. It is interesting to note that such a system was proposed in 1874 and a short demonstration segment was built (see **Cities**, p. 206). Streets would remain at ground level and function for service. Storage for service vehicles and servicing of all buildings would occur at ground level.

As part of a system, elements which once could only reside at ground level can now appear at upper levels. The newer developments can lift their community facilities into their very matrix. Upper level pedestrian streets can bring life into the very heart of building complexes; and shops, community rooms and schools once again relate closely to the people who want to use them. This can overcome the quality of psychological distance.

Our study of Dayton Towers proposes such a system. Our proposal envisions a long, vertically organized series of streets and other facilities binding the whole project together. In addition, we have indicated how this system can be applied within Manhattan.

The modern city of New York can then emerge. Once again it can become urbanized in a new and creative way. We have been led down blind alleys in our search for a more humane environment and have in the process designed a sterilized one. By conceiving of open space as part of structure, by developing community life in a multi-dimensional way, scale and livability, including enrichment and wide varieties of choice, can be brought back in all their forms to the New York City environment.

Complexification

Complexity, rather than simplicity, is a major factor in the process of making cities exciting and interesting and therefore satisfying places to live. One of our criticisms of much of the redevelopment projects that have been built over the last decades is that, because of their extreme simplicity and lack of variety of facilities and uses, they are sterile and dull and therefore uninteresting places to be in. This is confirmed by other writers, **all** of our consultants, and by every respondent to our questionnaires who has reported on this point. **Complexity is one of the major recommendations of this report.**

Complexification is, in addition to being a sociological and psychological need, also a **biological** one. All natural communities move from a state of simplicity to a state of complexity. So does the evolutionary process by which organisms themselves have evolved: from uni-celled organisms to complex aggregations. That ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny is as appropriate in human communities as it is in biology.

The normal course of events in a natural community is towards a large number of species, introduction of higher and higher forms of life, the continuation of early species even though newer, more advanced species move in, and a final symbiotic relationship among all of them and their environment. Diversification continues until a more or less stable community results which is highly complex, extremely diversified, and intricately interwoven.

Though stability is achieved it is extremely sensitive to change. Whenever new factors arise, the whole community will shift and the process of change and further diversification continues. The analogy to the urban environment and the redevelopment process is not only striking but important. The implication here is not that urban communities are the same as natural ones but that following a path of diversity in the urban environment **is biologically sound.**

There is a parallelism and agreement between the cultural and sociological needs of human communities and their biologic needs. Sterility and simplicity are not only enervating psychologically but they are biologically unnatural as well.

Conclusions

What emerges from our investigations of urban renewal in New York is at once simpler than we had anticipated and at the same time more complex.

The simple things seem to be in the area of needs and desires. More complex is how to achieve them.

We have found to our surprise (though this may not come as a shock to most New Yorkers) that people live in New York largely because they want to. On the whole the New Yorker's image of where he is and where he would like to be, seems closer together than we had imagined. This does not, of course, imply that New Yorkers are "satisfied" with their environment. They are not. It does seem to mean that New Yorkers are more inclined to deal with their city and improve it than to run away from it.

This seems to us to be an important basis for the future of the city.

Our next conclusion is that improvements to the city are not in the direction of suburbanizing it. The New Yorkers we have talked to want the city to remain **urban,** not become suburban. The core of the New Yorker's image of his city is not that of a green lawn dotted with small (or large, for that matter) buildings connected by winding paths, but rather a dense complex of buildings teeming with activity. The New Yorker's image of New York is New York, not Westchester County.

Third, is that New Yorkers seek social and physical interaction more than isolation. The common statement we find in New York is that the best parts of the city are those where people are able, even demanded, to relate to each other. It is not solitude and isolation New Yorkers seem to want, but activity. The most common danger is alienation and rejection.

As a concomitant of the above, New Yorkers want liveliness, color, excitement, complexity and variety. They do **not** want simplicity, sterility, similarity. Though common biologic needs of light and pure air and adequate interior space are necessary, the great environmental demands that people in New York feel are not being met are outward-oriented. This means that high density is not rejected per se, only the lack of facilities that this has come to imply.

The neighborhood as a viable functioning entity, focused on a community facility such as a park or a school or a community of interests, seems an important extension of family life to most New Yorkers. The great social conflicts we have uncovered are when renewal projects do not mesh with their neighborhoods but are isolated from them. This does not seem even to establish community qualities **within** the new project—simply alienation all around. It may be for this reason alone that maintaining and rehabilitating many existing structures in a renewal area is important.

We have been pleased to find that ecological principles mesh with sociologic, psychologic, aesthetic, and urban design principles. Ecological investigations in New York have shown us that isolated tall towers in large open spaces generate poor climatic results. Mid-block openings ameliorate summer heat. Trees on avenues offer important shade. Complexification and diversity are a biological imperative. Isolation and similarity breed stupidity. Interaction and variety encourage creativity. Finally, change is part of the inherent functioning of a biologically sound community.

From a design point of view, the results are identical. The isolated tower, the unipurpose land use, the oversimplification of pattern, the barren vastness of open space generate disenchantment and disinterest in the New York environment. Flexibility in use patterns is desirable, variation in scale, in pattern and the potential for change are imperative.

But involvement in the process of change is vital. New Yorkers anticipate involvement. More and more, they reject change which is accomplished **for** them. They wish to participate, they wish to express their **own** desires and achieve their own goals. Government and the normal administrative procedures of the past have not seemed to answer this need. Although significant advances in citizen participation have been made (the West Side Renewal was the first urban renewal project in the city to undertake and fund real citizen participation), new techniques are required to make **personal** the process of participation.

Herein lies our great difficulty. We do not seem to be able to structure the process of change. On the one hand we need citizen participation; on the other the magnitude of the physical needs of rebuilding are enormous. The demands we face cannot be solved by individual (or even clusters of) buildings built by entrepreneurs, with small amenities surrounding each other, as is now done. The task is too great and the **linkages** are too important. When we have spoken of the need for interconnections of structures into a linked system it is the **connections** which we have no way of now building. The linkages will effect proper movement which is so vital to New York. These are: movement of goods, services, utilities, pedestrians, and mass transit. All need an integrated **system** which will relate them to housing and commercial areas. A new system of streets will be needed to amplify the old outmoded ones; to function in response to the new demands and vast new concentrations of people.

To accomplish this task new procedures will be required to amalgamate structures into linked systems. The linked systems will require new concepts of property lines, of ownership patterns, of the breakdown of the present horizontal and vertical hierarchy of open spaces, of zoning restrictions, and of the implicit difference between private and public responsibilities for action.

In the final analysis the major problem that we have run into is the one touched on under our section of multi-dimensional systems. All renewal projects are small pieces of the city. They can deal with neighborhood problems, but they cannot really fit into the city. The problem of renewing the city as an entity cannot be achieved by **aggregations of discrete pieces,** no matter how beautiful each one is. There are intra-city needs which must be solved by overall coordination, design, and construction. Some of these refer to transportation, some to open space networks, some to community facilities such as schools, community centers, etc. The system we have proposed involves continuous linkages to move goods as well as services throughout the city, not only within projects. These can only be designed and built by citywide, interagency, as well as federal cooperation. Until such a time as this can be done, New York wil move by jerks and starts, renewing its parts but not able to rejuvenate its arterial system as a whole. That is what is needed.

One final comment is in order. This is a personal one. I have been away from New York for 30 years. This study has given me the opportunity to come back and spend time in the city where I grew up. I have seen it with newer, older eyes. New York is worth renewing.

New York is still our center. It has, at the same moment, the best qualities and the worst qualities of our country. It is all there to see and experience in one small concentrated area.

New York is still a place where you can start small and end big. As Ratensky says, there is considerable virtue in the constant movement of people in and out and primarily up. It echoes life. New York **is** a place for footholds and toeholds on the way up—it is the place to make it. If you make it in New York you really have something to crow about.

The city is changing big. Its environmental mistakes are big ones. I think they have been bad ones. But the purposes were good. To get rid of unhealthy, miserable housing and improve living conditions. I think it is not too late to start new. We have learned what is wrong and we can, I believe, apply the lessons. Beginnings are already underway. We know what needs to be done—maintain the qualities unique to New York and at the same time improve! This report I hope will help show how. Then it needs the concentrated and dedicated efforts of **everyone** to achieve it. New York . . . New York.

Appendix

Consultants:

Robert Alpern
Lawyer and Planner, Zoning Expert

Dr. Paul Baum
Director, San Francisco Institute of Gestalt Psychology

Lester Eisner
Former Regional Administrator, Region I, U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development

Dr. E. T. Hall
Author, **The Hidden Dimension** and **The Silent Language**

Jane Jacobs
Author, **The Death and Life of Great American Cities**

Dr. A. E. Parr
Senior Scientist and Former Director of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, New York

Dr. George Rand
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology and Education, Columbia University Teachers College, New York, New York

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Elizabeth Kempton
Community Relations, New York Housing & Development Administration

Hugh McClellen
Office of Planning, Design & Research, New York Housing & Development Administration

Barney Rabinow
Staff, City Planning Commission, New York

Sam Ratensky
Assistant Administrator for Planning and Design & Research, New York Housing & Development Administration

Ira Robbins
Member of New York City Housing Authority

David Talmas
Economist, Office of Program & Research, New York Housing & Development Association

A Proposed Encounter Group

The purpose of this encounter group is two-fold. One purpose is the collection of data. When people meet, they automatically begin generating data. Both parties learn what to expect of the other, even if what occurs is silence. A group of people meeting develops a structure which turns out to reflect the social structure that really exists. Several areas of the city are to be changed. Social structure is one dimension of the city which will be affected.

The second purpose of the group is to initiate the process of change. With the help of a trainer, the architects, planners, and city officials involved in the process of urban change can get to know the relevant data about themselves which undoubtedly are affecting their notions of change and their notions of how to implement change. The process of obtaining these data, however, is the beginning process of change. Understanding one's self truthfully and honestly, understanding one's prejudices, and acknowledging one's misinformation about one's self and others is a beginning change in one's inner structure which can very quickly be related to new ways of functioning in relation to others. Furthermore, a great deal of energy gets released in the process, which hopefully will be channeled into constructive efforts. By engaging in a relationship, the people being affected by change will begin to deal with it and may relate to the people whom they see as changers as people, rather than as impersonal forces. By revealing themselves, they will begin in a meaningful way to affect the process more directly than they might ever have hoped possible.

There are several possible designs for the group interaction, and one or all of them could be utilized. One group structure would have the non-resident people form a t-group (training group) in which they would be given training in understanding group process in which their own group would be the laboratory from which the data for learning would come. Such a group could either be an intensive, brief-period group or an ongoing, extensive group. The data provided by the core group would be supplemented by field encounters with project people. Field encounters would be situations in which group members would meet and interact with project people in and around the project. For example, an assignment might be to meet and get to know a housewife sitting with her child outside the project. Or it might be to find out where dope pushers or prostitutes are and to have a personal encounter with one of them. Or it might be to, on their own, meet and have dinner with a project family.

Another design would be for members of the designer, planner, city official group to be in an ongoing encounter group with representative residents of the target area as well as people representative of the users of the target area. The composition of such a group would need to be thought out carefully and should include, as far as possible, all those groups of people who are likely to be affected by any change in the area and who are in a position to cause some change. Examples of these people are: commuter; taxi-driver; vice-squad cop; pimp; prostitute; hustler; pusher; someone in drag; someone who owns and runs a store in the area, a big store, like Macy's, a small one, like an ethnic restaurant; executive; checking agent from the Greyhound bus terminal; member of an ethnic group; longshoreman; priest; Catholic layman; old person; young person; middle-aged person; a person from the nearest upper class area who is probably worried about his teenage kids using the area; school drop-out, including a drop-out who dropped out to work and one who dropped out to not work; someone from a local militant group; etc.

The training group is a microcosm. Each member will have a chance to enhance his understanding and awareness of how he relates to external systems and how they relate to him. In addition, he can collect data from the external system for use in his own change-agent capacity. Furthermore, the members will learn something of themselves. This is always the basis for creative change.

Paul Baum, Ph.D.
Clinical Psychologist

Give block # 88th St.
(Amsterdam-Col.)
and floor triplex in a brownstone.
(no name)

1 December 1967

These questions are being asked in the interest of developing quality neighborhoods for New York City. This study is being conducted by Lawrence Halprin & Associates for the New York City Housing and Development Administration. Any other remarks you would like to make please do so on the back of this sheet.

1. How long have you lived in this neighborhood?

3½ years

2. Do you like the neighborhood better now since redevelopment? In what ways?

Yes. When we first moved in, there were no children on the block and we were concerned about playmates for our two (boy, 8; girl 6). Now, new, young families have moved in with children and the kids love to run around together, in and out of brownstones - we have got the advantage of the suburbs and the enticement of the city to sustain, us adults. The young families who are moving in are more aggresive in their ideas and want to initiate improvements.

3. What neighborhood or community facilities do you use regularly: i.e. clinics, libraries, restaurants, movie theaters, etc.?

The children use the public school and the library, which is six blocks away (too far). We use the local movie theaters more than the midtown ones

4. What facilities would you like to have in your neighborhood that are not there now?

Branch of the public library, post office, swimming pool for children as well as adults. We have small neighborhood shops now (newstands, laundries, shoe repair, etc.) which will disappear with the West Side Urban Renewal we are undergoing - I would very much like to see these low-overhead, low-income stores retained. Facilities for teen-agers are lacking.

5. How far do you go to shop for groceries now?

3½ blocks to a supermarket on Broadway, ½ block to a small local grocery for forgotten items.

6. How far did you go to shop for groceries before redevelopment?

1/2 block to Columbus, where there used to be a large supermarket.

7. How far do you go for recreation and entertainment now?

Local movie houses - we will walk 10, sometimes 16 blocks (8 movies in this area). We go to midtown for the theatre, or off-Broadway. We go to midtown if we eat out, or occasionally up to 100th St. area to the Chinese restaurants there.

8. How far did you go for recreation and entertainment before redevelopment?

The same. After redevelopment is completed, I doubt that this will change appreciably unless a small movie theatre is incorporated (highly doubtful) or a skating rink or bicycle rental shop is located nearby (more probable) or a good restaurant.

9. Do you use the outdoor space in your neighborhood? Yes.

In what ways? I walk to work across Central Park. If the weather is nice, on weekends we tend to sit on the stoop because the block is attractive and our neighbors are friends. We will walk in Riverside Park a few times a year with the children. The children are outside a great deal of the time.

How often? → I walk to work (30 blocks) about every other day this past year, more often before and hope more often in the future.

10. Should the outdoor space be increased in your neighborhood? yes

If yes - for what purposes? - only if intelligently used - the space must need a definite purpose, subtle perhaps, but not a paved area with a few trees and potted plants because of zoning regulations. A good contrast between buildings tight against each other and a small open space is more exciting than a large, bland space - and three dimensions should be used. Shops, arcades facing the interior of the lots to pull people off side streets, outdoor cafe', fountain, pedestrian walks through the blocks.

11. Where in the entire city of New York would you most like to live if you could - forgetting cost? perimeter of the village (Greenwich Village) and the Upper West Side where we are now.

Why? The former does not have the bludgeoning dullness of the grid street pattern which I find odious and has the variety of people (races + economic) and stores I hope the West Side will achieve.

If not New York at all - where? Why?

Another cosmopolitan city - San Francisco because of its variety and the grid is mitigated by the extraordinary hills; Paris, London, possibly Rio de Janeiro - all these cities give me a sense of quickened pace, an assurance from the inhabitants that life is exciting, with an environment full of potential satisfaction no matter what my interest or mood at any moment.

QUESTIONNAIRE

How many people live in your apartment including you ?
(Please give ages and sex).

husband - 35
wife 34
sleep-in girl mother's helper - 20
son 8
daughter 6

What floor do you live on ? triplex in a brownstone

What rooms do you have ? - (living room, bedrooms, kitchen, kitchenette, diningroom, etc.)

living room	bedrooms	kitchen	diningroom
2	4	1	1

2 bathrooms
2 dressing areas
1 study
1 laundry room or sewing room

Do you consider the size of your apartment - small
just right
[✓ large]
too large

What do you like about it ? - (Sunlight, view, windows, plan, etc.)

The space and the stairs. I don't feel crowded. Having two exposures (typical brownstone), we get sun from the front, which is very pleasant. We tend to take all these pleasures very much for granted now. We use the garden in the rear quite often in warm weather.

If you were advising a friend who was considering taking the same or similar apartment - what good and bad things would you want to tell him ?

Since the apartment is really a renovated brownstone, it would be the problem of renovating - the headaches and dirt and the time it takes. This can be good or bad depending on the individual. The space and, as owner, the ability to change rooms, furniture, or even structure at will is the most pleasing.

What would you tell him about the previous apartment you lived in ?
(Be as specific as you can - for instance, not enough light, garbage collection was poor, the corridors were too small or poorly lighted, etc.)

No sunlight - only one exposure basically, to the north. Rooms too small as well as closet space. Children had to be taken to the park or visit friends (by appointment), supervised. Most neighbors were just nodding acquaintences, if that. We could not grow plants. I was cramped if I worked at home.

What do you know about the neighborhood in which you live ? - enough to know it's too little and that it is fascinating from all viewpoints - human or statistical.

What are its boundaries ? - (from what streets to what streets).

Core is the West Side Urban Renewal - 87 to 97, Amsterdam (although I would consider the west side of Broadway as part of this core, as well as 86th St.) to Central Park West avenues. The overall neighborhood for us is the walking distance - 72ND street to 100th St., Riverside Park to Central Park.

If you were telling someone about your neighborhood, what would you want him to know ?

The mixture of people and housing. The good transportation and parks. The growing number of young homeowners and interesting shops, which make me feel that the people I want to know live in the same area I do. The Urban Renewal Area is trying to reflect this in their planning and commendable attentiveness to the community, which is well organized. It is this sense of community organization that brought us here.

If you could, what would you change in your neighborhood ? - (such as more shops, a closer filling station, more places to sit outdoors and relax, more trees, less trees, etc.)

Break the street grid by pedestrian walks - this would bring other blocks together informally. Provide goals (toddler's park, cafe, small shopping arcade of neighborhood supported stores, teen-agers hangout, public school, library, community center) throughout such pedestrian paths. Create a pleasant variety in the spaces - create especially urban spaces - tight slots between buildings, pedestrian bridges across streets, views down on playgrounds - use 3 dimensions. More trees but break continuous linear quality as happens if trees are planted solely along streets, but not in side yards.

If you were walking in the area how would you know your neighborhood when you were in it ?

I would know my block by the large trees and number of brownstones and the sun on the sidewalk (very important to me). I would know my area by the variety of people, the dirt on the sidewalks, the large number of poor housing.

What changes have you noticed in your neighborhood in the past two years ?

An increase of young families, white middle-class, either as homeowners or tenants. An increase in brownstone renovation, and, of course, urban renewal construction of high-rise apartments. An increase in commitment to the area by not only homeowners, but by small stores, specialty type - design, antique, flower, psychedelic even.

If you wanted to take a short walk for some fresh air - where would you go ? - at night ? - during the day ?

At night we would stroll along Broadway, the west side of B'way being far more interesting because of the more variety in the shops. During the day, it would be the two parks, up Columbus or Amsterdam towards the Urban Renewal area under construction; or again Broadway. I would not go for a stroll south (downtown) along the avenues particularly.

If you work - how do you get there ? - (Describe the route).

I walk along 88th St. to Central Park, diagonally across via a variety of routes to 59th and Fifth and to 55th and Fifth where I work. Or I take the N°7 bus at 88th and Columbus and get off at 58th and ~~Sixth~~ Seventh ave and walk from there to my office.

Are you presently employed ?

yes

Are you retired ?

no.

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